

Wednesday August 19 1998

Albania D 5.50	Denmark D 5.50	France D 5.50
Andorra FF 10	Hong Kong HK\$ 25	Germany DM 3.00
Australia A\$ 2.00	Iceland ISK 135	Greece D 5.50
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Czechia CZK 20	Lithuania LT 1.00	Sweden S 10
Cyprus C\$ 1.00	Luxembourg F 40	Switzerland F 2.00
Egypt E£ 1.00	Malta M 1.00	Taiwan NT\$ 25
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The Guardian

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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Bid for redemption

Can Benazir bounce back?

G2 with European weather

Real Lives

Why Bret Easton Ellis is fuming about his documentary

G2 pages 4-5

Making hay:

An alternative to stuffy hotel rooms

Society, G2 page 12

Sorry, but war goes on

THE BOMBERS

'It was a commercial target, part of an ongoing war against the Brits. We offer apologies to the civilians'

- Statement by Real IRA



Michael Monaghan carrying the coffin of his wife Avril, buried yesterday with their daughter Maura as the first victims of the Omagh bomb to be laid to rest. PHOTOGRAPH BY DYLAN MARTINEZ

THE VICTIMS

'We are bereaved as a nation, Protestant and Catholic, and we feel betrayed'

- Bishop Joseph Duffy

John Mullan
Ireland Correspondent

THE Real IRA provoked yet more anger in Northern Ireland last night when it finally confessed to the Omagh bombing, claiming it delivered three clear telephone warnings 40 minutes before the 500lb car bomb exploded, killing 28.

The headline republican terrorists apologised "to the civilians" but attempted to blame the security forces for the worst single atrocity in 30 years of the Troubles. It denied that there had been an attempt to mislead the police and so cause widespread carnage.

The Real IRA, linked to the 32-County Sovereignty Committee, based in Dundalk in

the Irish Republic, indicated that the RUC had failed to clear the Co Tyrone town centre despite adequate notice of where the device had been planted. The target was commercial premises.

Although there was an apology, there was a chilling signal that the Real IRA would continue with its terror campaign. It spoke of an "ongoing" war against the Brits.

Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, reacted with undisguised fury. She said: "It is a pathetic attempt to apologise for and excuse mass murder. It is contemptible and it is an insult to the people of Omagh."

The Deputy First Minister of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Seamus Mallon, said the statement was so callous and pathetic it scarcely deserved a reply. "Murder

can never be excused or justified. The people of Northern Ireland will treat the statement and its authors with the contempt they deserve."

Community leaders in Omagh also reacted angrily. Geraldine Keys, development officer with community group Focus, which is made up of a number of associations in Omagh, said the statement "makes no difference at all."

She added: "Just admitting that they had done it does not make a blind bit of difference to the families who are burying their loved ones and those visiting injured relatives in hospital. They have evil minds and I hope and pray that they are caught soon and weeded out."

The RUC said: "The statement should be treated with the contempt it deserves." Officers who scrambled with the other emergency services through the rubble to drag

victims clear were enraged. People in Omagh spoke of their disgust at the Real IRA's claims.

The Irish government is expected to reduce the standards of proof required to prove a suspect belongs to an outlawed organisation, although there are fears that the Real IRA's leadership has already gone to ground. The cabinet meets in emergency session today.

The Real IRA's call was made to the Dublin office of the Irish News, Northern Ireland's nationalist morning newspaper. It claimed that the bomb gang had deliberately left the bomb at the Omagh shopping centre, rather than abandoning it in panic, as security forces believe.

The caller, using a recognised codeword, said: "This is Oglagh na hEirran. There

were three warnings put in. There were 40 minute warnings on each of them - two to UTV and one to the Samaritans in Coleraine."

"Each time the call was made, it was very clear and the people talked back. The location was 300 to 400 yards from the courthouse on the main street. At no time was it said it was near the courthouse. It was a commercial target."

"Despite media reports, it was not our intention at any time to kill any civilians. It was a commercial target, part of an ongoing war against the Brits. We offer apologies to the civilians."

UTV immediately rejected the claims about the warnings.

It said that the two calls it received did indicate the bomb was outside the courthouse, and made no mention of commercial premises.

A mother and child were buried yesterday in the first funeral for victims of the Omagh bomb.

John Mullan on a family's grief

HER two daughters, dressed in matching blue dresses, skipped out of St Macartan's Church, full of life. They said that their mother Avril Monaghan was in heaven with Maura, their 18-month-old sister. But, said neighbour Mairead McKenna: "What can a child understand?"

Aolbheann, five, and Elisha, four, had been christened in the same place. So was their brother, Patrick, three. He was carried to the graveside on his father Michael's shoulders. He looked bewildered as his dad's tears

at last began to fall. Mrs Monaghan, 30, and her baby daughter, remembered by all as a laughing bundle of dark curls, were buried yesterday in the family plot at Augher's Catholic church. They were the first victims of Northern Ireland's worst-ever atrocity to be laid to rest.

Mrs Monaghan's mother, Mary Grimes, who lives in another village, will be buried today. She was 65 on the day she was murdered.

The pair did everything together. They were shopping on Saturday at S D Kells' shop in Omagh for Aolbheann's

first school uniform when they were caught in the blast which claimed 28 lives.

They had been at St Macartan's first to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption, an important date in the Catholic calendar. They both went to the church almost daily.

Michael Monaghan, 32, a joiner, was in shock as the two coffins, one tiny and white, left the family home in the Co Tyrone village 15 miles from Omagh. He was dry-eyed as he carried his baby's remains into the church where she was baptised last year. But as the cortege snaked to the burial point, he could hold back no longer.

Most had given up long before. They wept as Father Lawrence Dawson, the parish priest, told the 1,000 mourners that they were attending more than a double funeral.

Mrs Monaghan, who turn to page 3, column 1

Polls back Clinton as First Lady says she was deceived



Martin Kettle in Washington

BILL Clinton came through the vital first examination by public opinion yesterday after his television admission that he had lied about an affair with Monica Lewinsky.

With much of Washington still shocked by the president's defiant admission of an "inappropriate" relationship with the former White House intern, the first opinion polls showed overwhelming public opposition to his resignation or impeachment.

Amid unusually widespread public sympathy for Hillary Clinton, the First Lady issued a statement saying she was

"committed to her marriage and loves her husband. Her spokeswoman said: "Clearly, this is not the best day in Mrs Clinton's life."

Mr Clinton's aides rallied behind him, supporting his call for an end to the investigations by the independent counsel Kenneth Starr in another day of intense political speculation.

As Mr Clinton and his family left Washington for a holiday at Martha's Vineyard, an ABC television news poll quoted 68 per cent of Americans as saying he should not resign, an increase of 11 points from the weekend.

In the same poll, 69 per cent thought Mr Starr's investiga-

tion should end now.

The ABC poll was supported by surveys commissioned by other US television networks. In a CNN survey, a majority of Americans - 53 per cent - said they were satisfied by Mr Clinton's explanation of his relationship with Ms Lewinsky.

Asked whether Mr Clinton should resign, 72 per cent of respondents in the CNN poll said he should not, with only 23 per cent saying he should. A similarly large 69 per cent opposed impeachment, with only 25 per cent in support.

But the percentage of Americans admitting to a favourable view of Mr Clinton as a man slumped from 60 per cent a week ago to 40 per cent.

The polls forced Mr Clinton's political opponents, who ultimately hold the key to any impeachment proceedings, to adopt a wait-and-see attitude. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, said: "I think that everyone would be best served if they waited for Judge Starr's report and found out what all the facts were."

But Senator John Ashcroft, a critic of Mr Clinton, said the president had "lost his moral authority to act."

In his tense, four-minute broadcast, a sombre Mr Clinton acknowledged a relationship that was "not appropriate" and "wrong", but denied committing perjury or encouraging others to lie.

"I misled people, including even my wife. I deeply regret that."

But the admissions were tempered by defiant attacks on Mr Starr and the "politically motivated" backers of Paula Jones's sexual harassment suit.

Congressional Democrats cautiously joined the move to rally behind him. The House minority leader, Richard Gephardt, said he was disappointed by Mr Clinton's pri-

vate conduct but called for an end to the Starr investigation. But a Democratic Congressman, Paul McClellan, called for Mr Clinton to "resign or face impeachment" for "a morally repugnant relationship".

One of the strongest messages of support came from the Vice-President. Al Gore, who is on holiday in Hawaii. Though Mr Gore's absence from Washington has caused comment, he issued a statement within minutes of the broadcast saying he was proud of Mr Clinton's courage.

Clinton scandal, page 5; Jonathan Freedland, Alex Brummer, page 5; Leader comment and letters, page 9

Murder rate low

LONDON has one of the lowest murder rates in the world - even below such well ordered cities as Geneva and Copenhagen, according to a new international league table of homicides published by the Home Office yesterday, writes Alan Travis.

At the top of the list is Washington DC with a murder rate which is a terrifying 33 times that found in London.

The murder capital of Europe is Moscow with 18.1 killings per 100,000 population.

At the bottom of the league is Brussels. Other cities with a lower murder rate than London include Dublin, Vienna, Rome and Athens.

Inside

Britain

A Channel 4 fly-on-the-wall documentary team was accused yesterday of staging scenes involving children in the care of Nottingham social services. Page 4

Finance

The collapse of the rouble could spell doom for hundreds of Russia's commercial banks, with no guarantee that the government can protect individual savers. Page 12

Sport

England's cricketers qualified for tomorrow's Triangular Tournament final against Sri Lanka at Lord's, despite losing to South Africa by 14 runs. Page 16

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'Vodka's my life blood and I used to dabble in fascism, but I've always taken pride in my thrift'

He's made billions, but the Ikea chief has been forced into a new confession, reports **Nick Hopkins**

INGVAR Kamprad, billionaire founder of the Ikea furniture chain, has often mused that his most important duty is to act as a role model for his staff.

In the wake of the launch of a new book about his life, it seems likely he intended to provide a template for corporate, rather than personal, behaviour.

Mr Kamprad's thousands of employees were yesterday reeling from the news that the firm's eccentric tycoon has struggled to control a severe drink problem for more than 30 years, and was a Nazi sympathiser in his youth.

The Swede who has opened superstores in 29 countries was contrite when he spoke about his past.

Fascism had been a mistake, but he "preferred Mussolini to that other fellow".

His drinking problem, which began when he developed a taste for Polish vodka in the 1960s, was under control.

The 72-year-old said he "dries out" three times a year. "There are a lot of people in Sweden in my situation. I have to clean out my kidneys and liver, and they should do the same."

Mr Kamprad did not want to confess. Ikea's spin doctors have striven to make the company synonymous with middle-class respectability, especially in the UK. But the boss, who founded the company 55 years ago and is thought to have a personal

fortune of £1.6 billion, did not have much choice.

He was encouraged to tell all by the authors of a forthcoming book, *The History of Ikea*, who had warned him they had delved deep into his personal life.

Mr Kamprad agreed to co-operate with them, and pre-empted the inevitable furore by returning to Sweden on Monday from his tax-exile home in Switzerland, to address reporters.

True to his thrift reputation, Mr Kamprad flew economy class and arrived at Ikea's flagship store near Stockholm on a public bus, saying he was making use of his pensioner's travel card.

"I'm a bit tight with money, but so what," he said as he

bustled into the customer canteen for the book launch press conference.

He began by explaining his problem with alcohol. "When we first started sourcing materials in the early 1960s in Poland, it was almost compulsory to take vodka. That is how it started."

Mr Kamprad said he abstains from drinking for stretches of three to four weeks at a time every year to ensure he does not become a full-blown alcoholic.

Then he admitted he was recruited to a fascist group in the 1940s. His involvement was "my life's biggest fiasco."

"I've apologised. I've apologised to my staff, and to everyone. It was terrible but now I want to put it all behind

me." Although Mr Kamprad did not elaborate, it is thought he was heavily influenced by his grandmother, a German who fled Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland before the war.

"Some parts of the media have tried to hang me because of my past. It hurts, but this has nothing to do with Ikea the company."

Mr Kamprad, a friend of Sir Terence Conran, does not like publicity and said he had only broken his silence so that he could give his side of the story before he died.

"As things will be said about Ikea and myself anyway, it's better to write something while I'm still alive so I get a word in the game as well."

Mr Kamprad finished by admitting he would step down as chairman of Ikea in three years.

He would always be parsimonious, despite his great wealth. "If I start to swank about myself and acquire luxurious things, then this will incite others to follow suit. It is important that leaders set an example."

Bottoms up: Ingvar Kamprad demonstrates a Polish drinking custom at his Stockholm book launch. PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA LITTON

Blunkett in move to safeguard A levels

John Gargan
Education Editor

THE Government acted last night to head off criticism about the dumbing down of A level standards by setting up an independent panel of experts to guarantee that the examinations do not get progressively easier.

As hundreds of thousands of A level candidates in England and Wales prepare to receive their results tomorrow, David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, said students, parents and teachers must have absolute confidence that A level grades are a fair reflection of attainment.

Senior government sources said ministers believed there was no evidence of any devaluation in the A level "gold standard". But the rival exam boards have faced persistent allegations that they gradually lowered the pass marks to attract more business from schools anxious to maximise their scores in performance league tables.

A level pass rates increased from 75.9 per cent in 1989 to 87.7 per cent last year and passes at the top A grade went up from 11.4 per cent to 16.2 per cent over the same period. The exam boards are expected to announce a further increase tomorrow, but will attribute it to another improvement in the competence of teaching and the effort of candidates.

Mr Blunkett said: "Public examinations are a vital part of education, and for many represent the culmination of years of hard work. We need to ensure that not only the standards of these examinations are maintained, but that those preparing for exams — teachers, candidates and their parents — can be confident that their results are a fair reflection of attainment."

Senior government sources said there was "no evidence that there has been a decline in exam standards, although each year we get these claims being made". There was no similar controversy in countries like France and Germany, where results also showed steady annual improvement in the equivalent of A levels. Conservative min-

isters tried two years ago to settle the long-running row about allegations of "grade inflation" at A level and GCSE with an investigation by the school inspectorate and the curriculum authority into standards over 20 years in English, maths and chemistry exams.

Their report found there had been a reduction in content, but did not discover any evidence that exams had got easier. The conclusions were tentative because the exam boards had not kept enough examples of candidates' completed papers.

This year, the standards row could intensify as traditionalists complain about the increasing popularity of "modular" courses — half of all entries — which test candidates periodically during their two-year course and place less emphasis on final written exams.

Candidates taking modular courses tend to get a higher pass rate, but fewer A grades. Ministers have already tightened up modular procedures by stopping candidates resitting module exams more than once and by insisting on a final exam covering the whole two-year syllabus.

Mr Blunkett also promised to give schools, colleges and candidates rights of access to marked exam scripts in the event of a formal appeal against a grade.

This will take effect next year, but the exam boards are likely to make contested scripts available immediately.

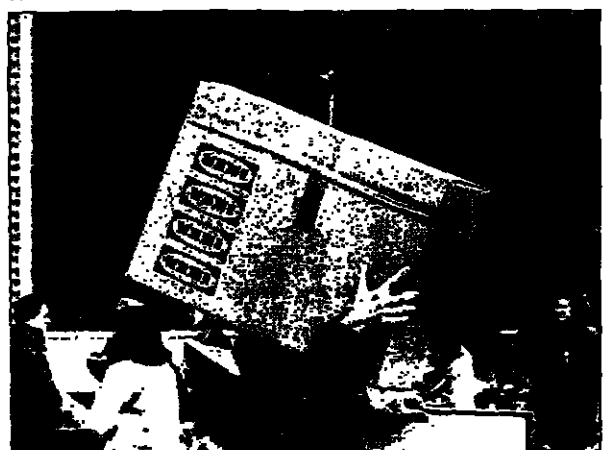
The Government is considering a more radical move to give all candidates the opportunity to look at their marked papers, but this is being resisted by exam experts.

Other elements of the exam standards package announced by Mr Blunkett yesterday included independent monitoring of appeal hearings, targets for exam board handling of inquiries and appeals, and better appeal arrangements for candidates taking vocational qualifications.

The Oxford and Cambridge Exam Board last night promised that its A level results would be issued on time, despite difficulties with a new computer system.

Leader comment, page 9

Raise your Klunks . . .



PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN REEVE

□ Ikea is the world's biggest furniture store chain with 149 stores in 29 countries.

□ There are more than 130 million visitors to its stores per year — one per cent of the world's population.

□ Ikea's seven UK stores employ more than 200,000 people and have 4 per cent of the UK furniture market.

□ Ikea distributes 7 million catalogues a year.

□ It sells glasses called Klunk and armchairs called Pixbo.

□ It is spending 2609 mil-

lion this year on new store development, including a branch in China.

□ It bought Habitat, with 40 stores, in 1992.

□ It plans 12 stores in Poland where many products are made — then will expand in Russia.

□ It was founded in rural Sweden 55 years ago by Ingvar Kamprad as a mail order business selling items like Christmas baubles.

□ Mr Kamprad, 72, is worth about £1.6 billion.

□ Profit in the 12 months to August 31 last year was \$522 million pre-tax.

Omagh victims are laid to rest

continued from page 1

worked part-time as a secretary, was expecting twin girls in October, and was excited about having six children all under six. She was looking forward to bringing them up in a peaceful society following the Good Friday Agreement.

Almost everybody was there. Michael is one of five, while Avril, his wife of seven years, had nine brothers and a sister, Mary. She is heavily pregnant and was unable to fly from London.

Big families are traditional still in nationalist Northern Ireland, and they are close. Three generations of a staunchly Catholic family had been wiped out in an atrocity carried out in the name of republicanism.

The Real IRA murdered

more Catholics than Protestants. Eamonn Monaghan, Mrs Monaghan's father-in-law, said he would much rather be in her place than that of the driver of the maroon Vauxhall which brought such devastation to a predominantly Catholic town.

Father James Grimes, Avril's uncle, had married Michael and Avril in her home village of Beragh seven years earlier, and struggled to contain his grief.

He said: "There are those in our society today who seem to have come to the conviction that the very life God had given us all is disposable. There are those who have no regard for the sanctity, sacredness and holiness of human life." But it was important to avoid hateful and vengeful

thoughts, though it was difficult. He asked God to help the men and women involved to change their hearts, that maybe this would be the last of the terrible agonies the people of Northern Ireland had suffered in the past 30 years.

Bishop Joseph Duffy, of the Clogher diocese, said: "Our sadness and grief here in Beragh is shared by so many people. We are bereaved as a nation, Protestant and Catholic, and we feel betrayed. 'Violence of any kind is the enemy of peace. We must exorcise it, take it out by the roots. Our whole future depends on this, and this is the Christian response.'"

The Monaghan and Grimes families, who pleaded for privacy, issued a statement thanking Sharon Robinson,

the shop assistant in SD Kells, the last to see the three alive. They thanked also the emergency services, bystanders, and their neighbours.

The statement spoke of Mary as ageless, a wife, grandmother, mother, and most of all, a friend. So too was Avril, while Maura was just a beautiful curly haired angel loved by everyone. It read: "Our thoughts and prayers are for the many others who are going through a similar experience to our own. We pray too for those that have been injured both physically and mentally."

The statement set the tone for Northern Ireland's response to the Omagh massacre. Terrorists, it said, can kill and maim, but they can never win.



Blinking Hell

At first it's not too bad.

And it's easy to see how it's spread. Just watch a child for five minutes. They don't sit still for a moment. They're always poking their fingers into something they shouldn't, then rubbing their eyes with grubby fingers.

And that's all it takes to spread trachoma.

You only notice there's something wrong when the child's eye starts to itch and swell up

It's not terribly nice but it's bearable, and the infection will 'burn' itself out after a few weeks, leaving just a small scar on the eyelid.

The trouble is, it'll be back. And it won't just come back once. It will strike over and over again, with every reinfection burning and scarring the child's eyelids a little bit more.

In the end, after years of suffering, the eyelids become so scarred and disfigured that the eyelashes turn inwards, into the eye. Until, agonisingly slowly, you go blind.

Imagine, every time you blink, you scratch your eyes

Think about it. You've probably blinked a dozen times since you started reading this. What if you'd scratched your eyes every time? You'd be in agony and you'd be

desperately trying to stop. But how do you stop blinking?

You may never even have heard of trachoma before, but 6 million people in the developing world are blind because of it. And millions more are carrying the infection. It makes life impossible for young mothers trying to raise children. Fathers and husbands can't work to support themselves, let alone their families. So the whole family suffers.

The utterly horrifying thing is, this suffering is totally unnecessary, because trachoma can be treated very quickly and cheaply in its early stages with Tetracycline ointment.

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"An abundance of individual hand-crafted words flows from the mouths of babes, sucklings and bicycle wholesalers only to be denied to a wider public audience, doomed never to be heard outside their homes."

Andrew Moncur on home-made words

G2 page 7

كلنا من الامل

Film of street children 'set up'

Council threatens Channel 4 with injunction unless filming of fly-on-wall programme ends

Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

A CHANNEL 4 fly-on-the-wall documentary team was accused yesterday of staging scenes involving children in the care of Nottingham social services.

The city council detailed a number of allegations against the producers of *Staying Lost*, a planned programme about homeless children. It has written to Channel 4 demanding that filming stop immediately, threatening an injunction if producers do not comply.

At the same time, Nottinghamshire police are investigating allegations of criminal offences against the film crew.

The council leader, Graham Chapman, said the production company behind *Staying Lost*, October Films, had encouraged children to leave residential homes and breach care orders to appear on camera.

One of the most serious allegations involves a girl aged 15 who is missing from care. She told her social worker in July that she had been approached by October Films and would be "working for the company for the next 12 months".

She said she would be taken to her health centre for contraception before being taken to another area of Nottingham to be filmed soliciting.

On separate occasions, Mr Chapman said, security cameras in the city centre had picked up the film crew constructing scenes involving children. One CCTV sequence showed the crew meeting two children, taking them to another area, settling them down on the street with a blanket and filming them begging. When the crew finished filming they took the children away.

Another allegation concerns a girl aged 15 said to have been filmed packing her bags to leave her care unit, only to return later that day.

The council also alleges that October Films paid the train fare of three children to go to Skegness, Lincolnshire, so they could be filmed absconding. The council says it has evidence that the children wore microphones for conversations with their social workers.

Mr Chapman said the council had not received a single request from October Films for permission to film the children, one of whom is only 12. "I am very angry about what has happened here," he said. "A fly-on-the-wall documentary is supposed to be reflecting reality. All the evidence we have suggests that they are staging up reality in this case."

"We are saying to October Films 'switch off the cameras that are making our children's lives more traumatic and complicated, and stop encouraging children to act irresponsibly, anti-socially and against their own interests for the sake of a few minutes of TV'."

October Films producer/director Tom Roberts refused to comment yesterday. The documentary has been commissioned by Channel 4's head of news and current affairs, David Lloyd.

Channel 4 yesterday admitted that permission to film the children had not been requested but issued a defiant statement responding to the allegations.

It said the channel had no reason to doubt assurances given by the producer that he had not offered inducements to children to take part in the film. The film-makers had also assured the channel that no shots of children had been set up.

Noting that the council had not gone beyond a threat of legal action, the channel described such action as "censorship of a company making a film which will expose the true state of Britain's street children and the agencies that fail them".

The statement added: "Should they proceed with legal action, we will defend ourselves."

Bankers warn prospective students of debt trap risk

John Carvel
Education Editor

SIXTH FORMERS celebrating A level results tomorrow that are good enough to secure a place at university are at risk of "walking into a debt trap" by underestimating the costs of student life, bankers warned last night.

A survey of sixth formers preparing for higher education showed they expected to spend \$29 a month on rent, compared to the \$176 average reported by university students.

"Over the course of a year, this would leave a student with a shortfall of nearly \$1,000 to meet. A miscalculation before going to university can soon spiral into real money worries for many students," said NatWest after questioning nearly 4,000 sixth formers, undergraduates and recent graduates.

Sixth formers substantially underestimated the amount they were likely to spend on alcohol and music, but planned to set aside more than necessary for food and books.

Nine out of 10 sixth formers said they would not spend any money on cigarettes, but students were spending \$40 a month on smoking.

David Bloomfield, head of student banking, was worried about prospective students' perception of rent. "If they go to university with a budget worked out on these figures, they could quickly find themselves in financial turmoil."

Source: NatWest Student Money Matters survey 1998.

Spending per month	6th formers' predictions	Students' reports
Rent	29	176
Entertainment/going out	89	89
Food	79	86
Alcohol	37	52
Cigarettes	4	40
Utility bills	30	35
Clothes	36	32
Books	36	20
Public transport	21	20
Music	10	17

Cockatiel conundrum



Found... The cockatiel in the care of Brenda McKinnell, in whose garden it appeared

PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL TEMPLEMAN

Woman in identity row over flighty bird ready to appeal to local beak

David Ward

A BIRD-FANCYING mother-of-two vowed yesterday to go to court to secure custody of her wolf-whistling cockatiel named Rod.

Yvonne Clarkson and Rod had been together for a week when he flew out of her back door. Unconsoled by the budgies and love birds at her terraced home in Newton-le-Willows on Merseyside, Ms Clarkson phoned for 10 days for her errant bird, a \$10 gift from her boyfriend.

Then her spirits soared when she read in a local paper that a cockatiel fitting Rod's description had been found in Brenda McKinnell's garden in nearby Burtonwood. She examined the stry, and cried: "That's my bird!"

But Mrs McKinnell had her doubts and refused to hand it over. "I must have had a dozen people claim-



Lost... Yvonne Clarkson here beside the empty cage of her wolf-whistling pet bird Rod

PHOTOGRAPH: JONNE ROBERTSON

ing to have lost a cockatiel," she said. "I want the bird to be returned to its rightful owner. But this woman [Ms Clarkson] failed to tell me his name or describe the unusual and distinctive habit he has."

The two women are now

attached to Rod," Ms Clarkson said. "When I went round to see him, I knew instantly it was him. He makes lots of strange noises and I could tell it was his distinctive voice."

"This woman [Mrs McKinnell] thinks I'm after some kind of freebie but nothing could be further from the truth. I could pick up a bird like him for \$10, but I want Rod back home where he belongs — not any old cockatiel."

Mrs McKinnell said: "I was absolutely terrified when a solicitor's letter turned up, demanding the return of the bird. I couldn't believe that after trying to do the right thing someone wants to take me to court. I just want the bird to go back to its rightful home."

Ms Clarkson's solicitor, Derek Forest, said his client was adamant the bird was Rod. "She was in tears when she described the situation to me," he said.

Hollywood star invoices Huddersfield

Stuart Millar

HE HAS starred in some of Hollywood's greatest movies and some of the not so great. At the height of his fame, he commanded \$2 million a film. But now Charles Bronson is kicking up a fuss over his latest appearance — in a video documentary of Huddersfield Town's First Division relegation battle.

The actor, who built his reputation as a money-mad hard man in the *Magnificent Seven* and the *Death Wish* series, is demanding payment for his appearance — 15 seconds of it — in the *Great Escape*. Not the 1963 classic but Simon Normington's nail-biting account of the York-



Charles Bronson: wants to be paid for documentary 'role'

shire club's battle for survival at the end of last season. In the clip borrowed from the original, a younger Bron-

son, now 76, is shown tunnelling to freedom as a Polish POW, Danny Velinski.

The actor is asking for \$350 (about £220); the director and the club have offered tickets for their home clash with Bolton Wanderers next March.

The director was given permission to use the clip by MGM studios, which owns the rights. But at the 11th hour he received a fax urging him to clear the actors' likeness rights with the performers' agents or their estates. "It just seems a little bizarre going to all this bother to satisfy a multi-millionaire who lives thousands of miles away in America," he said.

In situations such as this, Mr Normington may do well to consider the advice of another Charles Bronson. Brit-

ain's most dangerous real-life inmate.

It emerged yesterday that Bronson Mark II — whose violence in prison have kept him there since 1974 even though his original sentence was five years — has been using his time to write a booklet on how to deal with bullies. Called *Bullies*, it contains 12 pages of advice youngsters never to give in to bullies because they are "cowards who only pick on the weak".

Mr Normington remains determined to do the right thing. If the acting Bronson refuses the tickets, the director intends to pay.

In the meantime, the club has changed the hold music on its telephones to the theme from the *Great Escape*.

South-west tops new life quality league

Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

THE South-east of England might be the best region of the country for making money, but pollution, noise and traffic jams are worse than anywhere else, according to the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Quality of life indicators — including access to the countryside and recreation, public transport and rural shops — invert the South-east's traditional position at the top of the regional economic league.

The Government is planning to alter the conventional rules for classifying successful regions by lifestyle rather than the Department of Trade and Industry criteria for salaries and opportunities to make money.

The new method favoured by the Department of Environment sees freedom from congestion and noise pollution as a gain along with access to public transport, rural parish shops, leisure activities and open countryside.

On the old measures the South-east comes top, with East Anglia second, and the South-west third. Last comes the North-east, with the least economic activity and chance of getting a well-paid job.

In the new measure, favoured by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, the South-west comes top and the North-east comes second be-

cause its environmental and community advantages outweigh its lack of jobs.

East Anglia is considered second to the South-east in hourly earnings and low unemployment. In the new index, it falls to fifth equal with Yorkshire and Humber because it has a high level of urbanisation and poor rural services.

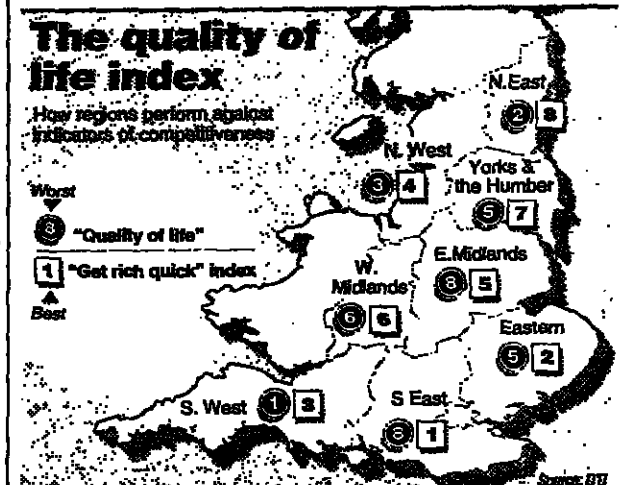
There has been a 33 per cent increase in three years in the number of parishes without a daily bus service and a 16 per cent rise in those without a shop.

The East Midlands, fifth in the affluence league, sinks to joint bottom with the South-east on the quality of life index. One reason is its sprawling, open cast mining with its attendant heavy lorry traffic. It also has the second highest percentage of empty properties, poor rural services and high car traffic levels.

The South-east is held up by the DTL as the model for economic competitiveness. The area, which excludes London, outperforms all other areas on seven out of nine indicators of financial well being.

The region is under severe stress. The amount of countryside considered tranquil is now 40 per cent of the total, existing traffic on rural roads is higher than any other region, and rural parishes have worst access to services.

Urban growth, already high, is expected to increase over the next 15 years.



'Outcast' heads search for BSE screening test

James Melville

A TEST to screen people for the human form of BSE and similar diseases might be available within a few years, researchers said yesterday.

The team, awarded \$500,000 in government grants, believes it will be able to tell whether its system will work within six months of experiments starting in October, although developing the tests will take longer.

The money has been awarded to partners shunned under the Conservative administration. Stephen Dealler, a microbiologist at Burnley general hospital, Lancashire, once regarded as a troublemaker, devised the programme, while Proteus International, a biotechnology company whose tests for diagnosing BSE in dead cattle have been spurned by British authorities, are providing technical know-how.

The Government's Public Health Laboratory Service, previously barred from an active role in the BSE/CJD crisis, will provide the laboratories in Leeds and other help.

The priority is a test for blood donors. The Government has already introduced an expensive filter treatment to remove white blood cells from 2.5 million donations a year to reduce the risk of patients contracting the disease

from transfusions but is desperate for reliable tests. No firm evidence of transmission has been found.

The researchers hope to detect the deformed prion protein believed responsible for BSE, its human equivalent new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, and other related disorders, in blood samples. This might be done by mixing in multiple antibodies which would display the presence of the deformed proteins. Individual results on donations might be evident overnight.

Dr Dealler conceded the tests would need to be very sensitive. "The British and European governments are aching for a method of diagnosis. It may not work. But we have to do something."

Proteus offered its post-mortem test on cattle brain and spinal cord tissue to the government some years ago. But the Ministry of Agriculture does not believe it reveals cattle with BSE which are not already displaying clinical signs.

The test is being used commercially under licence to Enfer, an Irish company, and the SuperValu supermarket chain there claims increased sales due to greater consumer confidence. The European Commission is also interested.

Arthur Rushon, Proteus's development director, said: "There has been a sea change in attitude under this Government."

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مكتبة النور

With just 500 days to go, the West is unlikely to fulfil its millennium promises to aid poor nations

Suffering goes on as debt relief hopes stall

In May, the Guardian launched a campaign to write off borrowings in developing countries. Today, its writers assess what has been done and what has to be done to alleviate the misery of millions

Larry Elliott and Charlotte Denny

THREE months ago 50,000 people took to the streets of Birmingham to shame the leaders of the West's seven richest countries into writing off the debts of the poorest nations by the millennium. Today, with only 500

days to go, aid agencies see progress as snail-like, at best. For all the high hopes — and diplomatic activity — of the British government in the run-up to Birmingham, the summit has achieved little. Japan is in the midst of its worst recession of the post-war era, German politics are on hold until after next month's election, France and Italy are obsessed with the



THE NEW SLAVERY

build-up to monetary union next January, and Bill Clinton seems unlikely to ask Con-

gress to approve a big write-off of debt when legislators may be about to impeach him over the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Britain hoped the summit would put more countries on the fast track to debt relief through the World Bank's heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative by 2000. Under the terms of the Mauritius Mandate, the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, wants 20 countries to be on a relief programme by then. Under the HIPC process it takes six years for a country to qualify for limited relief. The UK hoped that at least this could be waived for countries recovering from civil war. But even this modest goal was thwarted in Birmingham.

The final communiqué supported "the speedy and determined extension of debt relief to more countries" but the crisis was put on the indebted countries to put their collective house in order first: "We encourage all eligible countries to take the policy measures needed to embark on the process as soon as possible, so that all can be in the process by the year 2000". Behind the fine sentiments of the Birmingham finale is the hard message that the West is not prepared to go beyond HIPC, which requires countries to submit to the rigorous disciplines of the International Monetary Fund's structural adjustment programme. Aid agencies say expecting these countries to establish a sound

record of economic management while their budgets are weighed down by the burden of servicing debts is an impossible condition and harms only the poor. Three of the G7 are known to be demanding strict fulfilment of IMF requirements: Germany, Italy and Japan argue that giving relief before countries have sorted out their policies is throwing good money after bad. Relief should be a carrot for countries that successfully complete IMF programmes. The HIPC is in stalemate. In some ways the situation is worse than before Birmingham because the IMF and the World Bank are strapped for cash after bailing out Russia and most South-East Asian

countries. The bank's contribution to HIPC is funded out of its net income, which is projected to fall from \$1.7 billion (£1.05 billion) last year to \$700 million in 1999. Some of the more indebted countries, such as Tanzania, are coming up with their own blueprints requiring any money saved from debt service to be channelled into poverty reduction programmes, with every dollar fully accounted for. By meeting the objections of those countries that put good governance ahead of debt reduction, they hope to wring more generous terms out of their creditors. One idea is for a country to divert its debt service payments into a fund, supervised by international institutions,

which the country could use only for specified poverty reduction programmes. Countries would have to stick to a rigorous schedule of payments. At the end of a specified period, the debt would be written off, assuming schedules had been met and other aspects of economic management were satisfactory. Thus debt relief could be used as a carrot for reform and as a catalyst for improving the lot of the poor. Developing countries are waking up to the need to prove that relief will aid those who need it most, rather than misused. If the West were to show a willingness to meet them halfway and end to the debt crisis could be in sight.

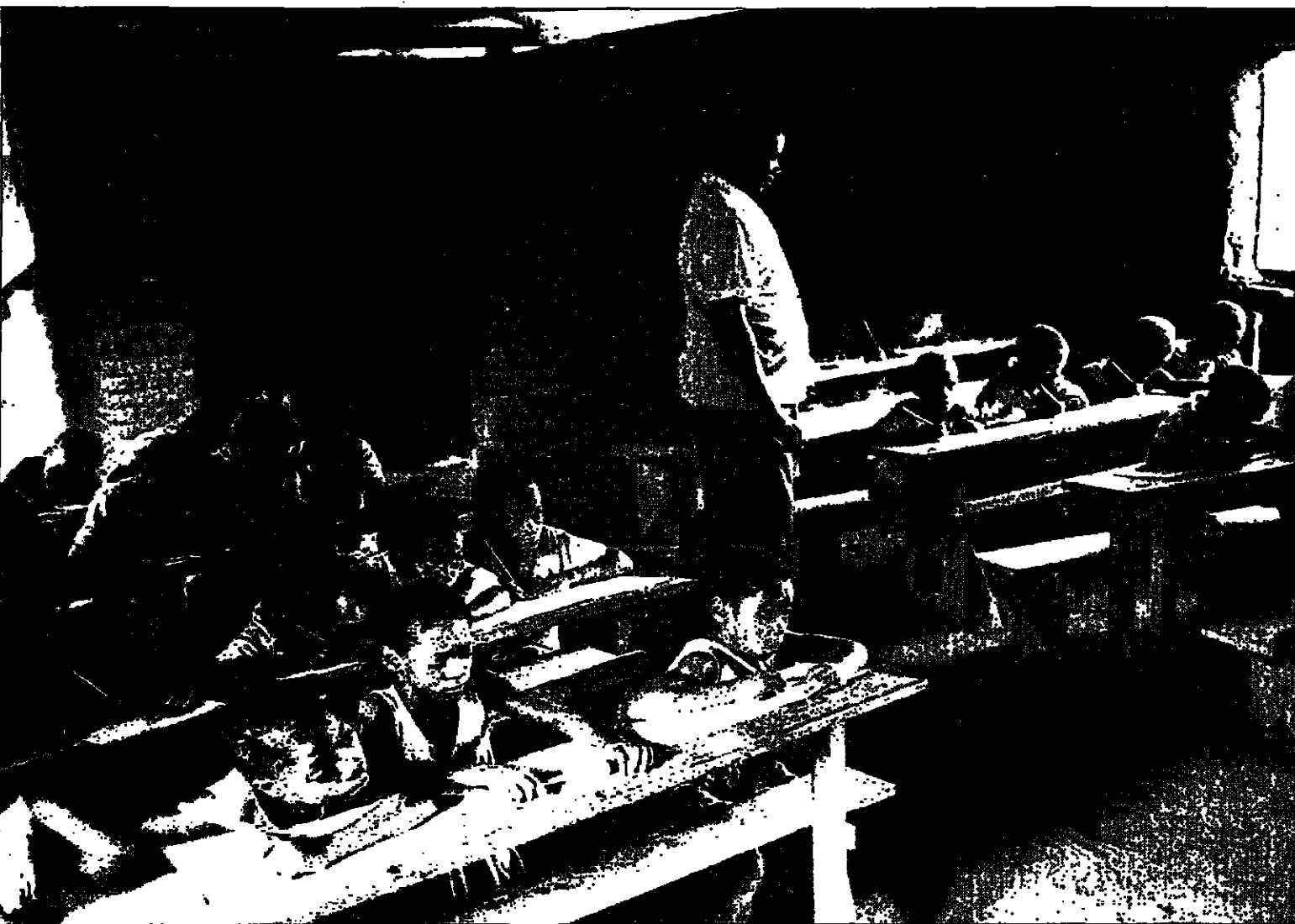
Where basic health and education are luxuries

Larry Elliott

THE children in Standard Seven at Kirumi school are clustered round the Mung'o tree listening attentively to their teacher. It is a sight you might find anywhere; pupils taking a break from the classroom and having a lesson in the fresh air. Except for one thing. The shade of the Mung'o tree is Standard Seven's classroom. When it rains, as it does for two months every year in the Mara province of Tanzania, they are sent home. Some other forms are luckier. They have classrooms, and the really fortunate ones have rickety desks. But the rooms have no doors, no windows, and most have no roofs. The pupils proudly wear green uniforms but many are unshod. Shoes are a luxury. Indeed, education itself is a luxury now that parents have to pay something towards it.

This is the human face of debt; the reality of life in Tanzania, where four times as much is spent on debt repayment as on primary education, and nine times as much as on basic health. The parents at Kirumi had a deal with the government. They would pay fees in kind by building the walls of a classroom, leaving the government to put on the roof. The parents kept their side of the bargain, the government did not. The classroom is still awaiting corrugated sheeting

because the money earmarked for it was spent on paying Tanzania's debts. "We are the victims of debt," says N M Eugene, regional commissioner for Mara, in north-west Tanzania. "We see the daily consequences of the lack of resources — the hospitals where people are not being treated and children dying in the villages because the dispensary does not have drugs." At Mosoma hospital, built in 1932 and showing its age, there are three doctors instead of 25. The hospital is kept going by 60 assistant medical officers, a lower grade who are supposed to staff health centres and dispensaries, a legacy of the close links with China stemming from Julius Nyerere's attempt to build African socialism in the 1970s. Despite stepping down as president 12 years ago, Nyerere remains a political force. From his hilltop farm in Butiama, he holds forth eloquently on the inequities of debt, the shortcomings of the HIPC — Highly Indebted Poor Countries — initiative for the poorest nations, and the tough conditions imposed on Africa. He believes the hoops a country has to go through — a six-year waiting period and acceptance of a total liberalisation package — are wrong. "A country is poor. That should be the qualification. I don't accept the principle of selectivity. You have millions of children not going to school, you have no drugs in



Privileged education in Tanzania where many children are taught without the luxury of desks and classrooms

PHOTOGRAPH: ALEXANDRA LAWRENCE

the dispensaries, you have children dying. What more qualification do you want?" Talk to the World Bank, the IMF, any creditor nation and they will agree that Tanzania is one of the poorest countries. But under the rules it will not get debt relief until 2002, because it has to have a six-year track record to qualify. And, despite embarking on an IMF-approved liberalisation package in the mid-1990s, Tanzania went back to square

one because it did not fulfil the IMF strictures to the letter in 1994 and 1995. "This is like dealing with the gods," says Nyerere. "If you do well all the time but then slip up just before you die, you still go to hell. It wipes out all the good you have done before." There was a time when Nyerere talked about organising a mass refusal to pay by debtor countries. He now realises this notion is futile. "But Tanzania should not be made to pay debt. It's immoral."

He adds: "My idea is to allow the poor countries to start again. Give them conditions, to spend the debt relief on education, health and clean water." The World Bank is sympathetic to the arguments, but its president, James Wolfensohn, pushed hard for the HIPC initiative in the face of strong reservations from the IMF and some creditor nations, including Germany and Japan. The IMF now insists that the HIPC conditions are met to the letter. The bank has merely been able to offer a second-best option — a multilateral debt relief fund into which Western nations can put money to help pay off the debts of the most impoverished

countries until they qualify for HIPC. Ronald Briggish, the World Bank's man in Tanzania, agrees the country has seen a precipitous decline in literacy and school enrolment. "This is a real crisis that needs to be addressed." However, he can see the case for conditionality. "Adherence is tough. But continuous performance is vital. Other countries have had continuous performance." Other countries include neighbouring Uganda, which last month was the first African country to benefit from the HIPC initiative. Its annual debt payments have been cut by \$44 million (about £27 million), money that will be chan-

nelled straight into education. Briggish believes other countries can learn from Uganda, which stuck to the IMF prescription year in, year out. "Deviations from performance are a real issue. The credibility of the policy is at stake. Liberalisation may have started in Tanzania in the mid-1980s but they didn't really make headway with it until the mid-1990s." The bank says Tanzania has the potential to achieve annual export growth of 6 per cent. At the finance ministry in Dar es Salaam, an official says: "If we did try to service all the debt that is due it would take up 50 per cent of government revenues. In five years time it could be 80 per cent."

Norway sets Third World aid pace

Charlotte Denny

THE Norwegian government plans unilaterally to write off up to a quarter of its outstanding loans to developing countries. The main scheme for dealing with poor country debt — the heavily indebted poor countries initiative or HIPC — is proceeding too slowly, the development minister, Hilde Frafjord Johnsen, recently told the Norwegian parliament. Since HIPC was set up in 1996, six out of the 21 eligible countries have qualified for the limited relief it offers. The main delay is the long period of economic reform required for countries to qualify. But it has also been stalled by the reluctance of some of the creditor nations to provide extra relief in exceptional cases. Norway hopes by acting alone and forgiving debt unilaterally, they will shame others into following their lead.

Britain has rejected acting unilaterally. The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, told the Commons International Development select committee earlier this year that while it was claimed unilateral action "would display our credentials better on the world stage... but the effect of that in relation to debt relief would simply be to reduce the bills other creditor countries had to pay and not actually reduce the amount of debt that had to be paid back by the countries we are talking about".

Norway has forgiven all debts made through its aid programme

Mr Brown was alluding to a problem in the set-up of the HIPC programme. Because it sets a maximum threshold for debt relief of 80 per cent, if one country forgives more than its share, it simply reduces the amount others have to pay to reach that target.

The Norwegians think they have solved this dilemma. They plan to offer their extra debt relief once a country has come through the HIPC process so their contribution will be additional to what the other creditors offer. "The additional Norwegian debt relief must not benefit other creditors," said Ms Frafjord Johnsen. Norway wants to see the maximum relief offered under HIPC lifted to 90 per cent.

Norway is already the most generous aid donor among the industrialised countries. It has forgiven all the debts made through its aid programme, something Britain has not achieved. The new plan will cost the budget a further \$250 million if approved by parliament next year.

Norwegian loans to the Third World total around \$1 billion, making it one of the smaller creditors. Most were incurred from government guarantees backing a ship export campaign in the 1970s. If, as Ms Frafjord Johnsen hopes, Norway can build up a coalition with the other Nordic countries which also have an enlightened attitude towards development issues, the latest move may prove more influential than the sums involved.

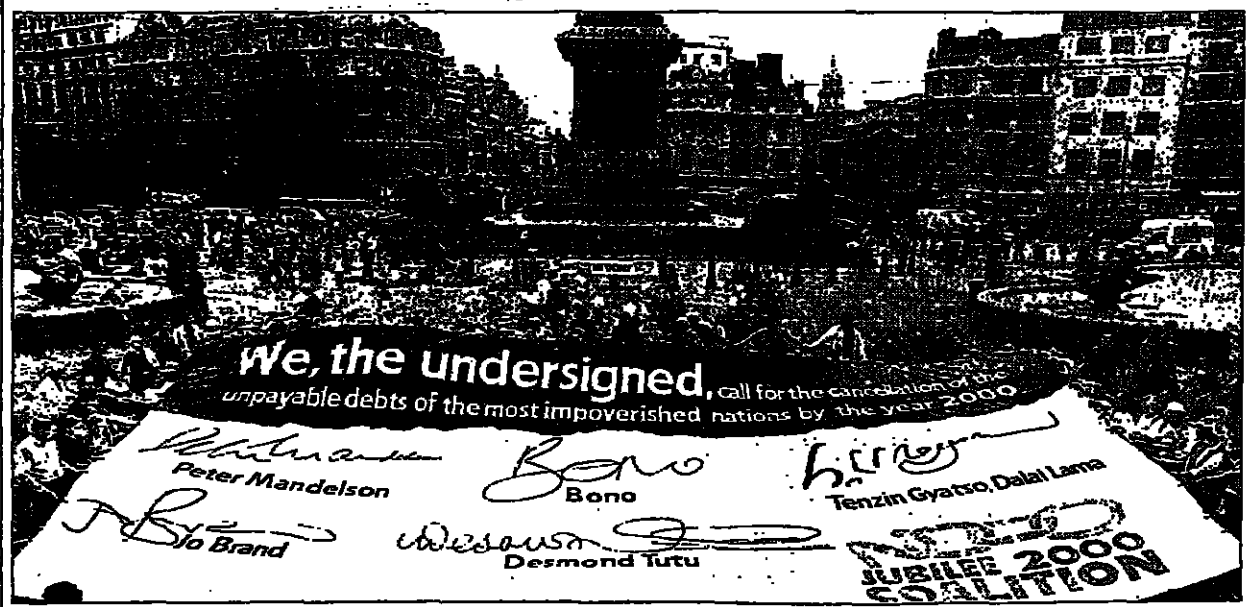
Britain and Switzerland have been targeted by the Norwegian government as countries who might be persuaded to follow its lead.

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Write to the Guardian/Jubilee 2000 at PO BOX 16630, London N1 7WF, enclosing a cheque for £30 (£20 donation plus £10 joining fee) made payable to Jubilee 2000, or call 0870 6060 203 (calls charged at BT national rates). Larger donations are, of course, greatly appreciated.



The bottom line

■ Bishop Desmond Tutu, the rock star Bono and others launched a 500-day countdown to the millennium in Piccadilly Circus, London, yesterday. Jubilee 2000 supporters unfurled a huge banner in Trafalgar Square (above).

■ Research by Oxfam shows that sub-Saharan countries spent more paying their debts (£7.4 billion) than they did on health and basic education in 1996. Almost half the people in the poorest countries — 220 million of them — are illiterate and live on less than 62p a day, and a third of children have not been immunised against the main killer diseases.

■ \$100 billion (£61.7 billion) was found in a few months to bail out South-east Asia. It would take only \$7 billion to clear the debts of the most impoverished countries, says Jubilee 2000.

■ The World Development Movement calculates that South Africa borrowed \$11 billion to maintain apartheid, and neighbouring countries were forced to borrow \$17 billion to counter the destabilisation this caused the region. The charity argues this debt should be classified as "odious" and mostly written off, as Germany's was in 1953.

■ More than 6,000 people have signed the Jubilee

2000/Oxfam website petition calling world leaders to cancel debt, and Christian Aid supporters will send hundreds of thousands of postcards to the German government.

Cafod, the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church, has challenged the World Bank and IMF's economic analysis of the poorest countries' indebtedness. A new report accuses the two world financial bodies, which set the terms and dates for debt relief, of having a "limited and flawed" view of what the poorest can pay. Instead of tying debt relief to export earnings, full account should be taken of countries' spending on

like health and education. Using Cafod calculations, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Malawi (which owe \$14 billion between them) would have all their debts cancelled, other countries less.

Oxfam has accused Italy, Germany and Japan of violating UN agreements made to support the poorest children in the world. The three countries, it argues, tried to delay and diminish debt relief, and opposed proposals to provide earlier and deeper relief. Oxfam has submitted its complaint to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

John Vidal
Photograph: Martin Argles



A couple watch President Bill Clinton's address on a large screen in Times Square, New York, and, right, Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, talks to the press after Mr Clinton's speech



Clinton and Starr in a fight to finish

The future/Despite the words of his live broadcast, the president knows he has yet to fight the decisive battle in the Lewinsky affair

THE White House spin machine yesterday carried forward the theme of Bill Clinton's late-night confession by arguing that the president now wanted to put the Monica Lewinsky affair behind him and begin the job of repairing his authority.

The Democratic Congressional leader, Dick Gephardt, spoke in similar terms.

But Mr Clinton knows that the Lewinsky scandal is not over. And he also knows that the final, decisive battle with the independent counsel, Kenneth Starr, is yet to come and that it will take place in the Republican-dominated House of Representatives this autumn.

That battle will come when Mr Starr submits to Congress his final report on his four-

year investigation into Mr Clinton's past business and other dealings. This could be as early as the second week of next month.

Much of Mr Clinton's investigation testimony on Monday, and his defiant late-night broadcast, can best be understood as an attempt to manoeuvre Mr Starr into the weakest possible position from which to launch his assault in Congress.

The Clinton broadcast's tone of bitterness against the independent counsel, and the reportedly sharp exchanges between the two men during Monday's 4½-hour evidence-taking session in the White House Map Room, underline the belief among the president and his closest advisers that he is engaged in a fight to the finish with a vengeful and politically motivated prosecutor.

Mr Starr has tracked Mr Clinton for four years on a host of issues starting with Whitewater, a 1990s land investment in Arkansas. But Mr Starr is expected to focus on the Lewinsky case as the basis for any possible action against Mr Clinton.

A president — as with all civic officers of the United States — can be impeached only for "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanours".

When Mr Starr began his investigations into the Lewinsky affair, he focused on three possible such "high crimes" — perjury, subornation of perjury and obstruction of justice. But the continued denials of all the main protagonists — including Ms Lewinsky in her grand jury testimony earlier this month — have made it more difficult for Mr Starr to prove a Clinton-inspired conspiracy to cover up the affair. As a result, Mr Starr is increasingly focused on the single potential high crime of perjury.

Mr Clinton did not admit to perjury on Monday when he was asked about his earlier on-oath denials of a sexual relationship with Ms Lewinsky. Indeed, he denied it. In his broadcast he said that the answers he gave lawyers in another case in January — when Paula Jones sued him for sexual harassment — were "legally accurate".

In other words, he did not believe that Ms Lewinsky's allegations fell within the definition of sex adopted by the Jones lawyers and endorsed by the trial judge.

If Ms Lewinsky, or Mr Clinton, is recalled by Mr Starr to give further testimony, this seems likely to be the focus of the prosecutor's inquiries.

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Mr Clinton may be an undisciplined husband, but he is a super-disciplined politician. By conceding that he had an "inappropriate" relationship with Ms Lewinsky he knows that the conflict will shift to Capitol Hill. That is why Monday's broadcast was a calculated attempt to throw himself on the mercy of opinion polls.

If the polls are good for the president in the run-up to the return of Congress on September 8, then he can expect the House of Representatives to lose whatever enthusiasm it now has for impeachment. But if the president's reputation goes down, the pressure among Republicans for a tougher approach is certain to grow.

A Missouri Republican senator, John Ashcroft, who has repeatedly called for Mr Clinton to resign, led the impeachment calls again yesterday. But senior Republicans such as the House speaker, Newt Gingrich, the judiciary committee chairman, Henry Hyde, and the Senate majority leader, Trent Lott — the

How to impeach the president

1. Special prosecutor Kenneth Starr needs support from the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee
2. Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde suggests his 37-member subcommittee should investigate
3. Judiciary Committee holds hearings to determine whether impeachment proceedings should go ahead. Witnesses might include Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky
4. 435-member House of Representatives votes a "resolution of inquiry" beginning formal proceedings
5. House of Representatives votes on articles of impeachment by a simple majority
6. The US Senate conducts full impeachment proceedings. Two-thirds majority is required to convict and remove the president
7. President Clinton is impeached and resigns

men who have to take the key strategic decisions some time next month — were reluctant to comment. They, too, are watching the polls.

Mr Starr continued to delve for evidence yesterday when he summoned Mr Clinton's former campaign strategist Dick Morris to testify in front of the grand jury yesterday. Later this week, the top White House aide, Bruce Lindsey is expected to testify, and a return visit by Ms Lewinsky seems probable. Mr Starr may well keep the politicians waiting.

Nevertheless, Mr Clinton's historic testimony — the first by a sitting US president in an investigation directed against him — represents a turning point in the Lewinsky saga. Over the next weeks, the focus in the inquiry will shift from the federal courthouse on Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue where the grand jury sits, to the House.

No investigation of a president can ever be non-political, but this next stage is intensely political. In 1970,

when Gerald Ford was a mere House minority leader trying to begin impeachment proceedings against the Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, the future president said that an impeachable offence was "basically whatever a majority of the House of Representatives" thinks it is.

Mr Clinton knows that many of the majority in the 105th Congress were elected as shock-troops in the stalled but still angry Gingrich Republican revolution. But he is also aware that American voters seem forgiving of his private wrongdoings.

He knows, too, that while many Republicans long to remove him, most of them — provided he retains the support of his own Democratic Party — do not hate him enough to hand the presidency to a man who this week is sensibly vacationing far away in Hawaii. Vice-president Al Gore.

Jonathan Freedland, *Alex Brown*, page 8
Leader comment and letters, page 9

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President still rated in his job

The polls/Most Americans distinguish between Clinton's competence and his integrity

Gary Younge in Washington

BILL CLINTON'S popularity shot up by as much as 10 percentage points in one poll taken immediately after the United States president publicly confessed to having an affair with Monica Lewinsky.

But other surveys showed his job approval rating dropping sharply after Mr Clinton told the nation that he had misled them, dissembled to the courts and was "solely and completely responsible" for the situation he was in.

It was one of the earliest polls, by ABC News, that showed a 10-point boost to his personal ratings.

About two-thirds of all Americans watched Mr Clinton's speech on Monday night and most made a marked distinction between his competence as a president and his integrity as an individual.

Sixty-eight per cent of Americans said Mr Clinton should not resign, an increase of 11 percentage points since Sunday, even though 62 per cent said they

believed he had obstructed justice in the investigation. Other polls showed his job approval holding steady or edging upwards.

A CNN poll revealed that his personal approval rating dropped by 20 percentage points to 46 per cent from a week ago. Forty-eight per cent said they had a negative opinion of him.

A CBS poll revealed some frustration with the length of the investigation into whether Mr Clinton had lied and tried to get Ms Lewinsky to lie. Two-thirds of Americans said the president should have come forward sooner.

Gary Langer, a pollster for ABC, said there were two reasons for the strong performance ratings: "the scandal's lack of relevance to most Americans, and the fact that most give him credit for the strong economy".

Mr Clinton had scarcely finished his speech than the parade of television law-



Carl Bernstein: Criticised non-stop news coverage



Arianne Huffington: Media star of the right canvassed

yers, pundits, authors and pollsters who have become known as the Monica Industrial Complex spun into action. Everyone from the editor of Good Housekeeping to Arianne Huffington, a right-wing media star, was asked for their view.

Bob Woodward, one of the journalists who broke the Watergate story, sat in a studio in Washington and asked the former White House chief of staff, Leon Panetta, who was in California, to look into his eyes and say what he really thought of the address.

Doc Dea Myers, the president's former press secretary, said Mr Clinton was "humiliated"; Carl Bernstein, the other main Watergate journalist, told CNN

that 24-hour news had fuelled the scandal.

In the president's home state of Arkansas people were disappointed. Patrons of Bailey's sports bar in Little Rock neither cheered nor jeered as they watched the speech.

"He lied to protect his family. That doesn't justify it or make it right, but it's human nature," said Jennifer Loeb, who has voted for him twice and would do so again.

But there was a sense of betrayal among many of those who have backed him. "How can he say [in January] he had no sexual relationship and now he says he did?" Luis Colon, a security guard in Los Angeles, said. "You can't have it both ways."

Leading nation loses its way

The world/Martin Walker counts up the global cost

THE quick trip across the Atlantic to deal with world issues is a time-honoured presidential play when pressure builds at home. Richard Nixon tried a Moscow summit in 1974, before the fides of Watergate closed over his head.

Today Mr Clinton can argue that the world needs him. "We have real security matters to solve," he said. There is the Kosovo conflict and the Russian financial crisis to tackle when he sees Boris Yeltsin in Moscow next

month. And he visits Northern Ireland at a critical moment in the peace process.

But the play may not work, because his critics have grounds for saying that the sudden spate of the world's woes is actually a product of Mr Clinton's recent personal distractions.

The Israeli daily Ma'ariv stated bluntly: "The president of the United States, the defender of the free world, has simply stopped functioning."

In Brussels yesterday, Commission officials tried to coor-

dinate the flurry of phone calls between bankers, commissioners, the International Monetary Fund and the Group of Seven main industrial nations, trying to work out what Europe could do to stabilise the Russian economy. But the decision-maker in Washington — the world's banker of last resort now that the IMF is almost out of funds — was not available.

Mr Clinton's clout with the Republican majority in Congress has never been so weak. So the bill to increase the US contribution to IMF coffers is languishing. Tokyo politely ignores America's increasingly strident demands to tackle its banking crisis before China devalues and the

Asian meltdown gets worse.

At Nato headquarters, the plans for a military intervention in Kosovo are complete. But the political decision to bypass the United Nations Security Council is one only the American president can make.

Even if Monica Lewinsky does not bring down this president, the world seems to be paying a steep price for those stolen moments of dalliance in the Oval Office.

It may be no coincidence that India and Pakistan openly displayed the military dimension of their nuclear programmes this year, with the only superpower otherwise engaged.

Revulsion as hurt horse labours in Siena square TV joins the outcry against Palio race

John Hooper in Rome

THE Palio, the twice-yearly horse race around the main square of Siena, has come under particularly searing criticism since one horse died and another was injured at the weekend's event.

Animal welfare groups have long demanded that the race, which dates from the 13th century, be abolished or reformed. Since 1975 37 horses have died.

But this year, amid claims of doping, critics have been joined by Italy's state-run broadcasting corporation, the RAI. Animal welfare lobbyists said the corporation had received numerous calls of complaint after the live broadcast on Sunday.

The RAI showed the pile-up after which a seven-year-old bay was put down. But it also caught another horse, Tuscan, struggling on riderless with a dangling and damaged hoof, and those images seem to have provoked most revulsion.

A member of the RAI's executive board, Gianpiero Gansaleri, called for the "reduction and possibly the elimination from the Palio of



Franco Zeffirelli: Claims the horses are stuffed with dope to make them fly

any violence towards people or animals.

Death and injury are almost inevitable in the Palio. The jockeys ride bareback and their mounts have to cope with a sand-covered course with tight corners. Animal rights activists say the thoroughbred horses are not strong enough to check themselves at the bends.

This year it was also claimed that the horses were drugged. Franco Zeffirelli, the film and theatre director and a longtime critic of the Palio,

said they were "stuffed with dope to make them fly".

He recalled that in 1996 two horses were destroyed. "One of the horses that was put down was buried immediately in quicklime which, as is well known, destroys any trace of performance-enhancing substances."

The consumer rights group, Codacons, said it had asked prosecutors in Tuscany to order doping checks on the horses and the jockeys.

Siena's mayor, Pierluigi Piccini, accused critics of bias against the city. "Every year, 186 horses die on Italian race courses, whereas it is two or three years since an animal died in the Palio." The race, in which each of the 10 horses represents a parish, arouses passion among the Siennese. The jockey blamed for the pile-up last Sunday had to take refuge in a church from angry inhabitants of the parish whose horse died.

The race's importance to the city has prompted some critics to call for it to be changed rather than abolished. The Italian Animal Rights League suggested "civilising the Palio, doing away with the exploitation and thinking up another sort of race."



The Palio is important to the Siennese, but animal rights activists say course is dangerous for thoroughbreds, who lack the strength for the tight bends

Time runs out for Kabila as rebels tighten stranglehold on Kinshasa

David Gough in Kinshasa

REBEL forces in Congo appeared to be closing in on the capital, Kinshasa, last night as the population sweltered on its second day without water, light or power.

The government of President Laurent Kabila was forced to admit late on Monday night that the rebels had captured the power plant at Inga, which gives them a stranglehold over the city. Promises were made on local radio yesterday that trucks would be delivering water and fuel, but none could be seen anywhere in the city yesterday.

Queues were building up around the city's petrol stations as people tried to buy paraffin, and the shortages are expected to worsen as supply routes from the Atlantic port of Matadi — also in rebel hands — are cut.

Francois Luzingu said he had waited for paraffin since 5am. "I know that the government is trying to help us," he said, "but I feel that the solution to this crisis is with God."

Confirmed reports reaching Kinshasa last night said the rebels had advanced to within 80 miles of the city. "A Western diplomat said that the line now only a matter of days before the rebels reach the capital of the former Zaire."

The British ambassador, Doug Sraffon, said that he had been trying to persuade all remaining Britons to leave the country immediately. However, he had warned around 120 people he termed "diehards" that if they stayed the embassy would not be able to help them.

Across the city there is an ever increasing sense of uncertainty with people desperate for any scraps of information that they can come by. For every question that journalists ask, they have a question of their own in reply. "Where are the rebels?" they ask. "Will they reach Kinshasa?"

All day yesterday tanks and



A boy shines the boots of a rebel Congolese soldier in the western port of Boma yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH CORINNE DUFR

soldiers were transported around the city apparently in preparation for an imminent rebel offensive.

The activity has done little to allay the fears of the 5 million people who live in Kinshasa and who are finding it difficult to come to terms with the fact that their country is once again at war.

Since the crisis began two weeks ago the government has stuck rigidly to the line that the rebel movement is an invasion by Rwanda, a tactic that has proved very successful

in whipping up a tide of xenophobia.

Every day young men have been arriving at the Stadium of the Martyrs to enlist with the army. Yves Peubha said that he gave up his studies at the university to join the army and fight what he termed "an invasion of foreigners".

"I love my country," he said, as groups of volunteers were marched around the environs of the stadium in basic drill exercises.

"Kabila is working hard for

the Congo and I would like to help him defeat the Rwandans."

But in an apparent volte-face the government admitted on Monday that there were a number of Congolese in the rebel army — a fact that the population of Kinshasa seems reluctant to accept.

Michel Buzungu, a 23-year-old student, said: "The enemy is well known. They are the little Rwandans and if it is true that the Congolese are also involved then they are traitors."

But the speed of the rebel advance towards the city would seem to imply that they are meeting little resistance along the way. It is also clear that the news of their advance is making the soldiers stationed in Kinshasa increasingly nervous.

Yesterday a soldier carrying a large machine gun stopped our car and climbed into the back seat. His breath stank of alcohol and he ordered us to drive to an unspecified location near the river. All the time he pointed

his gun alternately at the driver and myself.

But after 15 minutes of intense argument with the driver, common sense prevailed and the soldier left the car slamming the door and swearing as he went.

A Western diplomat said that morale in the military was getting lower by the day and added that he thought such incidents would become increasingly common as the tide of the rebel advance draws ever closer to Kinshasa and power.

Kosovans angry as Serbs expose the West's bluff

Jonathan Steele in Pristina hears a chorus of blame as Milosevic regains the upper hand

AS 250,000 ethnic Albanians wander desperately through the wrecks of burnt-out villages or take refuge in the woods, people in the Kosovo capital of Pristina vent their emotions on any foreigner who will listen. "We have no door to turn to. We feel trapped, powerless, and increasingly cynical," says Sevdije Ahmeti, the head of the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children, a non-governmental organisation.

Ms Ahmeti travelled at the weekend to western Kosovo with Richard Miles, the United States chargé d'affaires in Belgrade, to inspect the plight of the refugees. But near the city of Pec, Serb police stopped them on grounds of "security" from entering the back-country where the refugees are.

The aborted trip was only a tiny symbol of Serb forces' control of the province, a control exerted almost without challenge. This week's Nato wargames in Albania, far from encouraging Kosovo Albanians, have heightened the sense that the West is evading action.

The ethnic Albanian leadership — its politicians, journalists, and human rights workers — have never been so angry and frustrated with the West's failure to protect civilians from military onslaughts by the Serbs.

Veton Surroi, founder of the newspaper Koha, and a man often mentioned as a possible Kosovan prime minister were the province to win independence from Serbia, attacked the US for putting pressure on Ibrahim Rugova, the leader of Kosovo's main ethnic-Albanian political party, to produce a narrowly focused team to negotiate with the Serbs.

The resulting team, announced last week, excluded the opposition parties as well as the Kosovo Liberation Army, the armed wing of the pro-independence movement. "It is a quick-fix recipe which may be a deliberate or a miscalculated failure," Mr Surroi said.

The KLA had agreed with Christopher Hill, the main American troubleshooter in Kosovo, to join the team after the Serb recent offensive ended. But as the Serbs pushed the KLA back, the US changed its line.

Mr Surroi said: "The international community allowed the offensive in the sense. Nobody in the West was terribly unhappy about the offensive against the KLA. It made it easier for Rugova to put together a different team."

While European Union diplomats stood behind Mr Hill proudly claimed the Rugova team would start talks with the Serbs "despite the fact that violence is continuing on the

ground". However, Mr Rugova insisted the next day that Serb attacks must stop first.

Kosovo Albanian politicians are amazed the West could ever have thought negotiations were possible while the Serb onslaught continued. "I suppose when people start asking what you're delivering after two months of trying, it's easier to say 'I've succeeded'," said Mr Surroi.

Albanians also resent the racist-sounding implication that their personal feuds and failure to agree are "typically Balkan". They point to the unresolved arguments among Nato's European members and the US over military action in Kosovo as a poor model of unity and determination.

Mr Surroi rejects the excuse that Russia's objections are the main restraint. "No one has seriously asked the Russians to support intervention. If they see everyone else means business, they may not say no. You can always have trade-offs. Kosovo is not a high priority for them," he says.

Analysts now believe the KLA will return to guerrilla warfare. "The concept of liberated zones has been defeated. The KLA fell into the trap of thinking you could have territorial defence," said a member of the Albanian leadership's secretions negotiating team. "Now they must use mobile

'Nobody was terribly unhappy at the offensive against the liberation army'

guerrilla tactics with small, well-trained units."

Assuming no international intervention, the optimistic Albanian scenario is that the Serbs, with their long supply lines, armoured convoys, and fixed positions — will find themselves vulnerable to ambush. The casualty rate in a low-intensity conflict may eventually lead them to cut their losses and accept independence.

The pessimistic scenario is that the KLA will find it much harder to conduct ambushes than last year. The brutal Serb tactics of destroying every village in a mile-and-a-quarter band along every main road has deprived the KLA of the water in which the guerrilla fish swim.

The Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, can deny ethnic cleansing and say he wants refugees to return, since Serb civilians have not moved in to occupy the Albanians' houses (as they did in Bosnia). Albanians are not being expelled from the cities.

Mr Milosevic has done what he is so good at. He has bought time. There is no chance for people to rebuild their villages in less than a year or two. His military has regained the upper hand. Best of all for Belgrade, the West's bluff has been called again.

Manners maketh the new Israeli UN envoy fails to move Iraq on weapons

Julian Borger in Tel Aviv

AFTER decades in the wilderness preaching etiquette, Tami Leibovitz's charm school on the outskirts of Tel Aviv is besieged by former army officers, aspiring politicians and budding socialites, all willing to pay to break into polite society.

"There is a huge demand," said the image consultant, aged 50. "When I started years ago, people told me, 'manners is not for us. It is for Europe and North America'. But now with the globalisation of culture and business there are no more borders."

Mrs Leibovitz believes that her country's tradition of bluntness and plain speaking has become a burden on the world stage. In a speech earlier this month in Miami, she warned visiting businessmen: "Israelis will cut in on your conversation and will often interrupt. It is also quite common for an Israeli to complete your sentence for you. Israelis talk very loudly." One of Mrs Leibovitz's main clients, the foreign ministry, is aware of an image problem. A senior Israeli diplomat said that when briefing foreigners "my opening statement is: 'Let me tell you something about volume. This is our opening volume.'"

The diplomat raised his voice a few dozen decibels. "This is our cultural gap. So don't get offended," he added.

Mrs Leibovitz attributes the country's precarious strategic circumstances. "When I was 18 I was in the army, and then I married a soldier. We live in stress. My children went to the army, so I became the mother of children serving in Lebanon. I cannot sleep at night. And one day I will be the grandmother of a soldier."

There is also the "freier" factor. "Freier" is Yiddish for sucker and no Israeli, Mrs Leibovitz explains, wants to be seen as one.

"I have to tell my clients 'you are not a sucker — you're not a sucker' — if you have good manners, if you start behaving differently, you will see what you get from it."

Mrs Leibovitz takes her students out on to Israel's competitive roads. "Normally, if you want to turn left or right, nobody will let you into their lane. I show people that if you make eye-contact and gesture with your hand perhaps, people will make way for you."

Mrs Leibovitz and her company, Litam Manners, are not alone in attempting to prepare Israelis for a world of global communication. After a string of outraged letters to the press three years ago, the state-run phone company, Bezeq, issued a booklet of advice for users, in which it recommended that mobile phones should be turned off during funerals.

The mobile phone is ubiquitous in Israel and it has become one of Mrs Leibovitz's bugbears. "If I am in a restaurant, there will be people on all sides talking into their phones and not to the people they are with. I tell my students to turn it off. If they expect an urgent call, they should warn the other person and ask permission."

At Litam Manners' head-

quarters in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan, Mrs Leibovitz gives one-on-one consultations and group "finishing touch" courses. She also gives year-long lecture series at the Tel Aviv College of Management, costing about \$1,000.

She has several ex-officers on her books, who are trying to pick up civilian deportment to make a fresh start in business or politics. She also coaches politicians. Before yesterday's interview, she wound up a session with an aspiring candidate for Tel Aviv's city hall, a heavy-set woman dressed in black. "She'll have to go on a diet but she'll always be big. But we can do something with her clothes and the way she talks."

For Mrs Leibovitz, it is not just a matter of having nice table etiquette. She believes that the road to peace in the Middle East could be paved with good manners. "We have to see that even Palestinians are human beings just like we are. We don't know yet how to speak to other people and how to solve problems together. We have to learn that."

UNited Nations special envoy said yesterday he had failed to persuade the Baghdad leadership to resume cooperation with UN weapons inspectors.

Prakash Shah plans to fly to New York today to brief the Security Council. He went to Iraq after Saddam Hussein cut off cooperation as the UN Special Commission monitoring Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, Baghdad accuses the commission's chairman, Richard Butler, of blocking progress towards lifting international sanctions on Iraq.

"There was no change in their policy," Mr Shah told reporters. But he added that Baghdad was prepared to keep talking.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirm that Iraq has rid itself of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Butler flew to Baghdad at the beginning of August in an attempt to persuade Saddam to accept an accelerated programme of weapons inspections which would speed the end of the embargo. But the chief Iraqi negotiator, Tariq Aziz, rejected the proposal and demanded that the UNSCOM chairman certify Iraq's compliance immediately.

Mr Shah said yesterday he had met Mr Aziz twice, and put forward a proposal by the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, for "a comprehensive review" of sanctions, once inspections had been resumed.

UNSCOM's monitoring of already identified suspect sites has been allowed to continue, but all inspections of new locations came to a halt after Baghdad's announcement of a rupture in relations on August 5.

Julian Borger

Comment

Diary

Simon Bowers

It is only natural to expect ministers, on coming to office, to rearrange the furniture, change the odd picture around, or perhaps re-paper the walls. You will recall how Jack Cunningham had fresh flowers specially delivered from Kew Gardens on a daily basis after spending £2.5m moving the Ministry of Agriculture to its new, lavish Smith Square location in Westminster earlier this year. Now that Jack has moved to the Cabinet office, taking up the mantle of Enforcer, we learn of his latest changes. The eight-strong staff of his private office has kindly agreed to vacate its vast room for the Enforcer himself to inhabit in privacy, while his researcher must content himself with the former Secretary of State, David Clark's old office, which is newly refurbished. The portfolio-less Lord Falconer, meanwhile, takes up residence in Peter Mandelson's old office, famed for its striking etchings.

FOR three years and three months now, the middle classes of West London have been barracking the Heathrow Terminal Five inquiry with their whinging nimbysism. After 20,000 written submissions and £4m of local council money, the inquiry is soon to announce its findings. The voice of reason will be heard, but Digby Jacks of Feltham just can't wait. "Sir, I disagree with your lead story 'Air noise is driving people to the edge of madness' (July 31st)," he writes to the Richmond and Twickenham Times this week. "This is OTT!" Apparently without irony, he continues, "As a resident living right under a flight path, I sometimes welcome the two Concorde flights to New York on some Sunday mornings. They help me wake up after a very busy and stressful working week." Your acquaintance, Digby, is an example to us all.

WITH A-level results due out tomorrow, it falls to those of us who have been through this trauma to smugly ponder whether standards are slipping and whether younger generations will ever be quite as clever as we are. Meanwhile we are concerned by the dangerous precedent being set by the Border bookshop cafe, 197-213 Oxford Street, London. They are offering a free 100 ml tub of Ben and Jerry's ice cream to students receiving lower than a "C" grade in any A-level subject. This, we feel, is disgracefully irresponsible behaviour and will do nothing to raise the standard of next year's results.

THE novelty vegetable growers, Monsanto, have had a bad press of late but we hear their troubles may soon be resolved. Despite commendable attempts to market their genetically altered veg under the wholesome slogan "Food, Health, Hope", a head of self-styled eco-warriors have recently forced Monsanto into a regrettably ugly position. As a result, PR giant Burston-Matthews has been brought in to cope with these crop-wreckers and who better to deal with this sensitive issue than their new director of corporate management, Neil E. Berman. The 51-year-old is an FBI veteran of 27 years' service, during which time he was in charge of the joint terrorism task force in New York City and led the hunt for the World Trade Centre bombers. A swift and definitive solution to Monsanto's woes is anticipated.

ANOTHER contender appears in our search for this month's PC Brains. After discovering the gates of an allotment site had been tampered with, reports Police magazine, PC Dave Westward of Moxborough in South Yorkshire decided an observation point should be set up. It was not long before Dave was radioing his colleagues outside the site. "Yes, I can see them moving towards me... no they're coming back." Do they look like they're running on the spot Dave? "Yes, they do!" Extraordinary behaviour for vegetable rustlers, but not as it turned out, for the rotating arm of a filter bed in the adjoining water treatment works.



Zippergate is a scandal of modern times – for him, for her and for us

Jonathan Freedland



NSOMNIACS and obsessives couldn't wait till the morning. They stayed up until 3 am to watch Bill Clinton give his TV address live – and they weren't disappointed. It made gripping viewing: Clinton dispensing with his usual ticks of faux sincerity, the bitten lower lip, the jabbing forefinger – speaking instead in uncharacteristically spare, terse sentences. He sounded like he meant it. Not so much a contrived, which was pretty halfhearted (no mention of "sorry"), as the self-pity. That was genuine.

Clinton's attack on his tormentor, independent counsel Kenneth Starr, for conducting a hunt which "has gone on too long, cost too much and hurt too many innocent people", sounded as if it came from the heart. The much-trumpeted apology, by contrast, came over as cursory and small. Rather than deliver the healing mea culpa aides had trailed, the President resorted to more of his trademark leg-spread. That relationship he had denied on national TV just seven months ago? Well, it had happened after all. Those denials, some of them under oath? Don't worry, soothed Bill, they weren't lies. On the contrary, they were "legally accurate". Who can blame the American audience if they heaved with nausea at that? Who can blame Republican Senator Orrin Hatch, heared to mutter off-camera: "Wasn't that pathetic? I tell you, what a jerk."

It was all there to be lapped up by cable and satellite viewers, spoiled for choice in the coverage of Clinton's five minutes of shame. The keen-eyed viewer would have clicked past Sky, NBC and even CNN, settling instead on BBC World. For yesterday this otherwise creaky and frequently dull, channel came up with a visual masterpiece.

The backdrop for its Washington set was not the usual city skyline, complete with Capitol dome, but a poster-size portrait of the woman at the heart of the trouble. Except the way the camera was angled, the top half of Monica's face was constantly cropped out of shot. As correspondents analysed and dissected the president's words, over their shoulder there glowered a giant pair of thick, red lips. The signature image of the night was not the pale, untypically drawn face of Bill Clinton but Exhibit A in the entire Zippergate scandal: Monica's mouth.

It was an appropriate illustration, and not just for the crudely obvious reasons. OK, the blow-up pic cast a sinister shadow over the entire proceeding – making it hard not to laugh as pundits urged the President to "come clean" or at least give a "full-throated" apology. But the big mouth also spoke volumes about this entire affair – and what it says about the times we live in.

For Zippergate is truly a scandal of our time – and there are few better ways to judge an era than by the scandals that outrage it. They stand as handy time-capsules, bringing together the obsessions and taboos of a generation. If you want to understand the 70s, look at Watergate. Keen to examine our own times? Follow the Zipper.

Watergate arose in the era of ideological polarity, the cold war years when hardline Republicans genuinely believed Democrats were a few pink steps away from Soviet communism. The 1972 presidential candidate George McGovern was a dangerous communist, whose headquarters in the Watergate complex could be seen as the legitimate target for a break-in. Critically, the key players in Watergate were all men: from the plumbers who staged the original burglary to the dirty tricksters and "rat-fuckers" who covered it up to the two reporters and their editor who eventually blew the lid. Like the book said, it was a story of All The President's Men.

Zippergate could not be so different. Bill Clinton is not accused of an act of political sabotage against his rivals – unless you count the intellectual burglary he has committed on the Republican programme, stealing large chunks of their policy. The partisan clash of today's politics – in Britain as well as America – has lost the cold war ardour of old.

NOR has Bill Clinton been flushed out by the dogged work of a single newspaper, as Richard Nixon was hunted down by the Washington Post. This president has been the quarry of today's very different media, made up of countless TV networks, at least half a dozen of which churn out "news" 24 hours a day. Details which in Nixon's day would have remained unpublished now surface immediately – usually outed by one of the journalist guerrillas of the Internet. If Nixon had been around today, not many of his exploits would have remained deleted.

Which brings us to Monica's big mouth. Zippergate is the scandal for the Jerry Springer era, the epoch where everyone is meant to say everything. Confession is the definitive 90s genre, from Diana on Panorama to the Clintons on 60 Minutes. It's no surprise that Monica has been Linda about Bill, nor that Ken Starr wanted Bill to tell the rest of us about Monica: these are days in which secrets are forbidden.

Emotional openness is the most revered ideal, discretion a forgotten art. But Zippergate's most 90s feature is its cast list: the lead players are women. Monica, that BBC backdrop, but also Ms Tripp, Paula Jones, Hillary and Chelsea. In direct contrast with 1974, the most overused headline of 1998 has been All The President's Women. For these days the greatest heat is not generated in the battle of left vs right, but man vs woman. The key questions of our time no longer centre on the threat of a guided missile, but the threat of an unwanted hand – with sexual harassment in the workplace top of the list. That's why Mr Clinton's admission that his relationship with Ms Lewinsky was "not appropriate" is precisely the damning word an American woman uses to complain about a lecherous boss.

The great irony is that so many of these features of the 90s landscape were ushered in by Bill Clinton's fellow baby boomers and specifically encouraged by him as president. In policy terms, he has been a great friend of women's rights – preserving the affirmative action policies that have propelled women forward at work. Moreover, Clinton has consciously nurtured the open, informal, confessional atmosphere of modern US life: he used it to highlight the generational difference between himself and George Bush in 1992. He has even done his bit to make life easier for the giant companies whose TV divisions are now making his life such hell.

So Bill Clinton has helped fashion the world which has found its clearest expression in Zippergate. In the most profound sense, and for all his dodging yesterday, it is his scandal. And here. And ours.

Clinton reshaped the whole government machine to give economics the highest status. The Reagan-Bush obsession with militarism (exercised through the build-up of the Pentagon budget) gave way to a sharp focus on business. A National Economic Council, with similar powers to the National Security Council (which gained such authority under previous presidents), was established at the centre of government – in the White House. Its job was to ensure that economic policy enjoyed the same status within the government apparatus as superpower politics had played in a previous era. There were two primary and interconnected goals: to eliminate the budget deficits which had made the US a pariah country among its Group of Seven partners and to restore vigorous economic growth. Both of these objectives and much more have been achieved.

Amid all the recriminations over the Lewinsky affair over the past seven months, it almost went unnoticed in the spring budgetary actions, together with high growth levels meant that, for the first time in two decades, the US budget deficit moved into surplus.

Indeed, the big debate between the White House and the Congress about next year's budget has been about how best the government surpluses are now spent to enhance educational levels and output, rather than cutting the public sector, which has been the theme for so many years. Unemployment has been cut to levels (4.4 per cent of the workforce) which economists until recently thought were impossible without causing inflation to accelerate.

The transformation of science laboratories into hi-tech research, together with a technological renaissance and low interest rates has unleashed a boom in wired industries, from the Internet to cable and digital. Through agreements like the NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Area)

and the World Trade Organisation, the Clinton team has sought to build international relationships based upon commerce, business and economic liberalisation rather than arms.

The peace agenda also has been at the forefront, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East and NATO. There may be much unfinished business, in terms for instance of the Oslo accords, but the efforts to underpin diplomacy with economic ties and growth is a far more forward looking approach than the old arms sales and control approach.

The pillars of the Clinton presidency have been its ever-vigilant approach to international economy and finance. Knocking these down on the basis of narrow constitutional arguments about the president's personal life would be a futile ethical gesture which would damage us all.

Wildlife is now incompatible with human aspirations. It has served Britain badly and progress now depends on eliminating the risks that science shows it poses. A sanitised, wildlife-free environment is the least we can provide for our children.

Bill's big triumph

Alex Brummer



THE real test of the Clinton presidency is how effectively it has handled the challenge of being a post-cold-war chief executive. In the Clinton era, the commanding heights of leadership have been dominated by the new geo-economics.

It is an agenda which Clinton and his advisers recognised, as they plotted the future from Little Rock, in late 1992. The unprecedented economic prosperity of the past six years, which has transformed global commerce and improved living standards throughout the West, is his achievement alone.

Anyone yearning for a more moral presidency (if such a concept exists) should remind themselves of the hopeless leadership of Jimmy "Just in my heart" Carter under whose stewardship the mighty US dollar had to be rescued by the International Monetary Fund and American diplomats and citizens were held hostage in Tehran until the inauguration of his successor Ronald Reagan.

As for the Reagan presidency, backed by the morally indignant religious right, it ended in the far more serious constitutional impropriety of financial and military diversions during the Iran-Contra affair and a US economy burdened with a national debt of \$2.6 billion.

The goal of the Clinton presidency was to reshape the US economy for the 21st century. It looked like an impossible task. Some 12 years of benign neglect of the budget during the Reagan-Bush era had condemned the US to a long period of economic stagnation and decline.

Clinton inherited an economy which was barely growing, in which unemployment was rising, inflation was above the post-second-world-war norm, productivity was shamefully low and in which large parts of industry – across the Rustbelt states from Pennsylvania to Illinois – were decimated by international competition.

ABOVE all, it was an economy in which an annual budget deficit (of \$305 billion in the last Bush budget) was crippling the private sector by pushing up the costs of debt service. Until the deficit was tackled, restoring growth and productivity, the US's creative genius could not be released.

Clinton reshaped the whole government machine to give economics the highest status. The Reagan-Bush obsession with militarism (exercised through the build-up of the Pentagon budget) gave way to

Nature serves man, and any wild animal that threatens us or which cannot be proven to perform economically or aesthetically should be eradicated

Kill, kill, kill

John Vidal

THERE are 440,000 promiscuous, dangerous badgers out there threatening people's health and undermining the economic interests of farmers but Labour has only chosen to cull 12,000. This is a mistake.

The answer is to exterminate brock. This would save the NHS and the taxpayer money, and signal once and for all that government is on the side of business.

New Labour has done its bit to make us more fearful of nature, but the public is still not fully aware of the risks. Last week there were reports of sea creatures stealing people's memories; razorfish booby-trapping beaches; an exploding rat population and hordes of baby-eating mink on the loose. This cannot go on.

Nature serves man, and any wild animal that threatens us or which does not have proven economic or aesthetic value should be eradicated.

The list is long: birds and insects threaten crops; rabbits steal grass; bats, moths, flies, wasps, frogs, snakes, mice, beetles, mosquitoes, midges, fleas and dragonflies figure in no economic accounts. We do not need wasps, sorry, maggots, or ticks, let alone invertebrates and amphibians.

In fact, nature now holds back progress. Birds cause aircraft to crash; we spend millions disinfecting water supplies; and animal farts cause global warming.

We learn the true danger of nature only with scientific experimentation. New Labour should act on the precautionary principle and exterminate the lot. Besides, most animals are dirty, unpredictable and

millions of years to adapt, but has failed. To eradicate wildlife would do nature a service. Animals are dangerous to themselves, killing each other regularly. The most successful – pigs, sheep, cattle and fowl – prove nature now needs man to survive. As it is, butterflies spend much time inefficiently flapping their wings, this fly in circles rather than straight lines; and some animals sleep for months.

Moreover, research shows that animals do not always care for their young. Many die in infancy and life expectancy is low. Much wildlife is also mentally ill-equipped to cope with today's stresses. Farmed animals need extra protection because they benefit us. People die from eating infected cows, chickens and sheep, but this is because they are allowed contact with killer

bugs. Keeping animals in germ-free environments would eliminate risk and allow them to live longer. Fortunately, policies for the eradication of wildlife are in place. All Labour needs do is intensify its systematic denudation of the

land with its farm and transport policies. We are well on the way to eliminating thousands of species, but we can go faster. Starting at the bottom of the food chain, Labour should pass laws to force landowners and gardeners

to sterilise with weed-killers and insecticides all wildlife habitats. More money could then be invested in genetic engineering to produce bird- and insect-resistant weeds, crops, flowers and plants. Future farming will not need snails, slugs, worms, birds or microbes.

But New Labour should recognise that people have irrational attachments to some animals. It should propose hi-tech responses to people's emotional needs, issuing licences for companies to broadcast birdsong and animal noises from hill-tops and hedgerows.

Wildlife is now incompatible with human aspirations. It has served Britain badly and progress now depends on eliminating the risks that science shows it poses. A sanitised, wildlife-free environment is the least we can provide for our children.



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'The Grass Roots Alliance is neither grass roots nor centre-left as it claims'
Tom Sawyer, Letters

Clinton's stupidity

But he should survive

BILL CLINTON has finally admitted what the majority of Americans suspected all along: he did have a sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky which in previous statements he had tried to cover up. Since so much had already been published pointing in that direction, there was little sense of shock yesterday. The mood was more one of embarrassment that the president — their president — should have been shown up so spectacularly. How, America asked, could he have been so dumb?

Most men (and quite a few women) are well aware that they are capable of behaving with equal stupidity in sexual matters. Many people have committed comparable follies in their lives which they would cringe to have exposed in this way. Presidents who live by the media can have less complaint if they are slaughtered by the media, but they are not saints. Nor has Mr Clinton ever denounced sexual impropriety elsewhere — indeed he has previously acknowledged his own propensity for causing "trouble in my marriage". What makes this affair different is its entanglement with the legal process conducted by the independent counsel Kenneth Starr. The possibility that Mr Clinton may have committed perjury is not diminished by his post-Grand Jury broadcast on Monday night, and it explains some of his evasiveness.

This text of less than 500 words will now be submitted to the most rigorous analysis by Mr Clinton's enemies. They will point

out that he did not explicitly admit to a "sexual" relationship with Ms Lewinsky, only to one which was not "appropriate". He also insisted that in his previous deposition in January — where he had denied having sexual relations with Ms Lewinsky — his answers were "legally accurate". He had erred only in failing to "volunteer" additional information. It is doubtful whether the president still really believes that oral sex does not amount to real sex. But he is trapped by his previous lies into speaking evasively where a franker admission would have served him much better.

At the same time, Mr Clinton has not minimised his personal culpability in more general terms. His statement was an admission that, morally if not legally, what he did was completely wrong. Of course we all know that — if he had not been found out in this particular act — he would have kept quiet and perhaps have behaved in a similar way in the future. But how many people will resist completely the temptation to err again if they think they can get away with it? Most polls taken after the presidential statement show a fall in his favourable rating: it would be amazing if they did not. But nearly two-thirds of the American people still appear to believe that the matter should now be dropped. That is a sensible and charitable conclusion, only underlined by the speed with which calls for his resignation were issued by such deeply grotesque figures as Dan Quayle and Jerry Falwell.

Mr Clinton will have to work phenomenally hard to avoid being labelled as a lame duck for the remainder of his presidency. Nor is he yet out of the wood in which Mr Starr wields a powerful axe. (Mr Clinton was right in essence but very unwise tactically to attack Mr Starr's investigation in his statement.) For all his resilience, he may not be up to the task. But to say that the

presidency as such has been fatally weakened by this episode is nonsense. Mr Clinton's troubles should not be an alibi for US failure to act in the Middle East peace process — where the will was lacking long before Ms Lewinsky was heard of. And the mystique surrounding this institution was eroded long ago — from the Vietnam War onwards and downwards. Politicians nearer home please note: the presidential mode may not be such a great idea after all.

War on the poor

Britain must act on world debt

DEBT CRIPPLES, debt kills, debt destroys lives and places, and debt denies hope of better tomorrows. We can only conclude from observing world leaders in the past three months that the IMF, other banks and national politicians actively want to continue the mindless exploitation of the world's most vulnerable people and further a scandal that now beggars belief.

Since the Guardian joined Jubilee 2000 in May to press for faster and deeper debt cancellation in the most impoverished countries by 2000, the debt burden has continued to grow and the poorest countries now owe the richest a mind-numbing \$2,000 million. It is modern slavery. As Larry Elliott and Charlotte Denny report today, almost no international progress has been made to find an answer, despite growing public pressure and an ever-deeper sense of outrage.

In the past year, \$27 billion has been found to bail out private corporations and governments caught up in the South-east Asia crisis, yet next to nothing has gone to help the people who most need healthcare and education. Japan, Germany and Italy,

indeed, have tried to obfuscate the issues, opposed proposals to provide earlier and deeper relief, and pressed for the latest possible dates to write off debt. They may well, as Oxfam accuses them today, be guilty of violating UN commitments to children. Only Norway has had the courage to act unilaterally. Britain has huffed and puffed, but achieved little. Chancellor Gordon Brown means well but refuses to act on his own. It is not good enough. If ending this outrage means breaking ranks with economic allies, then so be it.

New Labour rightly banned land mines and increased significantly the amount of foreign aid. Yet now it says it is powerless. A shame on your house, Mr Blair. There are 500 days to go to the new millennium which is little in world politics. Informal get-togethers every few months are not enough. History will record that Britain and the richest countries declared war on the poorest people in the world in the late 20th century and then, knowing the impact, stood by as millions died and suffered for their greed. The next chance to put debt on the agenda is in Washington next month at the IMF/World Bank annual meetings. Both Gordon Brown and Clare Short are expected to be there. They should bang heads together and, if that fails, signal that Britain will act with moral authority and go it alone.

examination papers. Yesterday the Education Secretary announced that from next year, students and teachers will be given automatic access to marked GCSE or A level scripts if they think there are grounds for appealing against the grade on a particular paper. Take a bow Hilary Moriarty. And well done David Blunkett.

Many examiners will be unhappy, but not all. Hilary Moriarty has been an examiner. She wrote of the satisfaction she would get from candidates being made aware of the care with which each page of their scripts was marked. But not everyone may be as conscientious. Access to marked papers where there has been an appeal will open up a previously closed system. More transparency is long overdue. It will introduce a level of accountability which will make the less diligent more diligent. Examiners do have a demanding task with perhaps 300 papers to be marked in three weeks — frequently on top of other teaching work. The temptation to cut corners is obvious. There are already safeguards introduced by the boards and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but nothing so safe as giving pupils and their teachers access to marked papers.

The Education Secretary indicated yesterday he could go one step further and give all pupils access to their papers. He will be consulting parents, teachers and the examination boards. The boards have already signalled their concern. They are worried that open access will encourage litigation leading to the defensive tactics adopted in the US — an emphasis on multiple choice to reduce the risk of challenge. More multiple choice would be a reverse but it will not necessarily follow. The new appeal process will provide a useful pilot and Ireland has just given open access to all its pupils. The onus must remain on being open.

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Exam audit

Return papers to pupils

RARELY CAN a teacher have achieved such a prompt ministerial response. Two months ago Hilary Moriarty, a deputy school head, made a spirited call in Guardian Education for the right of pupils to see their marked

Letters to the Editor

A stage for shirty views

IF Trevor Nunn believes that the Royal National Theatre truly lives up to its name (Letters, August 17), why did it take them until 1991 to stage a play by a West Indian playwright (Mustapha Matura) and until 1994 for a play by a black British writer (Winterson Pincock)? Nor have they staged plays by Derek Walcott or Wole Soyinka — Nobel prize winners both. The spat over Oklahoma looks irrelevant from this "restricted view". Derrick Cameron. Liverpool John Moores University.

OF the successful "stand-alone" nations Martin van den Berg lists (Letters, August 17) Luxembourg is a full member of the EU, Norway a participant in the European Economic Area, Bermuda a British colony whose currency is pegged to the dollar, and the US is in a free-trade agreement with Canada and Mexico. That leaves Taiwan and Switzerland. And the Swiss government is desperate to join the European Economic Area. Ken Bagnall. Stockport.

FILM historian David Thomson puzzles over why Stanley Kubrick lives near St Albans (Byes wide open, August 15). After Hollywood, west Hertfordshire is the major centre for anglophone film-making. No wonder Kubrick thinks talking to film historians is a waste of time. Chris Jones. St Albans, Herts.

NOTE that blue-striped prison shirts are becoming collectors' items (Shirts that turn a sentence into a statement, August 13). The male staff at the Halfway bank wear seemingly identical shirts. Is there a connection? Dennis Tomkinson. Leeds.

ON August 13 you report split infinitives are now OK, according to the New Oxford Dictionary. On August 17, the letters section contains five split infinitives (to indiscreetly sacrifice, to boldly split, to politically destabilise, to also sit, to also report). Are we the world's most with-it readership? Janet Evans. Ascot-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire.

Natural approach to tax

MARTIN Cohen ignores the fact (Green taxes a dangerous nonsense, August 17) that most green campaigners see such taxes as part of a package of necessary reforms including increased public transport subsidies and a universal system of unconditional benefits (known as the citizen's income).

Higher taxes on fuel use, carbon combustion and other forms of waste and pollution would wholly or partly finance the other two parts of the package, thereby protecting the poor against any increases in the cost of living.

The higher cost of moving goods, far from being an argument against fuel taxation, is one of the strongest arguments in its favour. By raising the cost of centralised production and distribution, it would boost local economies and reduce the waste that results from lorries carrying differently labelled, but otherwise identical, cargoes in opposite directions on the motorway. Brian Fawcett. Joe Otten. Green Party, Leicester.

DOES Martin Cohen not understand that green taxes would replace other taxes? If green taxes replaced income tax, council tax, business tax, corporation tax and VAT, taxation would be much less socially regressive. Green taxes increase the cost of using nature's resources, while our present taxes increase the cost of using human resources — and the poorest in society use more human resources to maintain their health, homes and food than the richest.

Obtaining social revenue from those using nature's resources is a far more intelligent tax policy than the present mish-mash of taxes. Owen Ephraim. Chelmsford, Essex.

AGREE with Martin Cohen — taxing activities that are recognised as being (potentially) environmentally damaging is unlikely to change the behaviour of the well-off and will prejudice the less well-off, perhaps, in the case of small companies, even putting them out of business.

The only efficient and even-handed method of achieving environmental protection is the proper enforcement of our comprehensive environmental regulatory regime. This requires a well-resourced Environment Agency and a court system that takes environmental offences seriously.

One wonders, therefore, if the so-called "green" taxes are really being proposed to achieve environmental protection or simply as another means of raising tax. Pamela Castle. Head of Environmental Law, Cameron McKenna, London.

MARTIN Cohen says the RSPB supports higher taxes through domestic water-metering. The RSPB supports water-metering, but we have not advocated a tax on domestic water supplies.

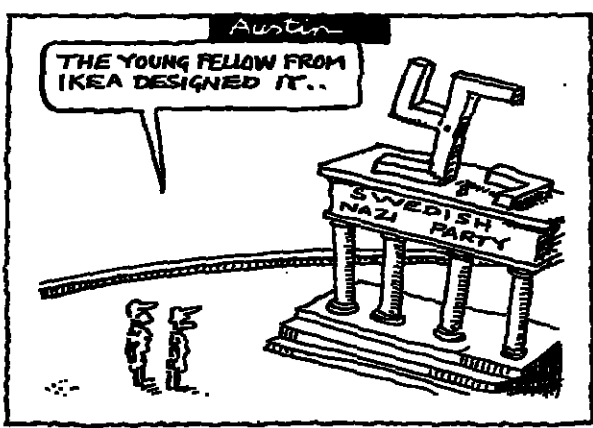
Water-metering encourages the efficient use of water and could reduce the amount taken from the environment. This would help to protect more than 50 wildlife-rich wetlands threatened by over-abstraction.

To support the wider use of green taxes in environmental policy. Taxes on pesticide use, water pollution and water abstraction could, if properly designed, help to reduce pollution, discourage unsustainable resource use and protect wildlife. A tax on pesticide use could cut domestic water charges by reducing the cost of removing pesticides from water supplies.

While the costs remain hidden, there is little to encourage us to live in a more sustainable way. We are worthy of so much attention, why are we not joined up.

But no matter. My point is that the Grass Roots Alliance is neither grass roots nor centre-left as it claims. Its three candidates for the NEC elections are all prominent long-standing members of factions which have been in and around since the 1970s and before and are in varying degrees opposed to the party leadership, whether it be Callaghan, Kimock, Smith or Blair.

Why don't they just come clean and say so. I don't like members to be misled. Tom Sawyer. General secretary, The Labour Party, London.



A wider perspective on terrorism

THOUGHT the following line might be of use to anyone hoping to engage in terrorist activities without the inconvenience of being condemned by the world's media, hunted down by a super-power, or tried for murder.

1) Lead a government. If fraudulent elections or constitutional manipulation are necessary to keep you there, don't worry, no one will notice.

2) Use men in official uniforms to carry out the bombing, shooting, and other activities in which you engage.

Using additional men in face-paint and bandanas is also a good idea as the target population often finds them more terrifying, they save on resources, and are useful as scapegoats should your actions draw criticism.

3) Persistent, low-level activity is best: bombs in market places and public buildings are out; as are sieges of big cities. Keep the casualties down: 10 a day max, preferably rural non-Westerners.

4) The intended victims should have suffered enough long-term provocation to have come up with a self-defence operation. Further provocation should ensure its growth, and the development of an offensive strategy which will legitimate your own operation.

5) Use friendly language: hygienic words like "flushing out" and "clean up" go down well. Use military terms to describe targets, for example, "fortress, strongholds, centre of operations in North or on."

6) Never refuse any offer for talks, indeed, make continual offers of your own, as talking provides an excellent cover. By the time the talks are over, there is every hope that the problem will have been completely "cleaned up". Dr Lyne Jones. Cambridge.

IN the 24 hours after the Omagh bombing, about 35,000 children in the world died from avoidable illnesses (Unicef figures). Hundreds die every day in Sudan. Surely the biggest challenge is how to connect with human beings no less worthy of our anger and grief than those killed and maimed in Northern Ireland. Frances Stappes. Haque International Development Worker, Manchester.

Forget Bill's philandering, this was purely political

THE driving force behind the investigation of President Bill Clinton is neither public curiosity nor the intrinsic importance of the issues raised. (Why are we so curious to expose him? August 18).

Rather, Kenneth Starr's four-year fishing expedition is essentially motivated by partisan and ideological opposition to Mr Clinton.

The investigation has the enthusiastic backing of the Republican-controlled Congress, which believes that the \$30 million price-tag is a sound investment in Republican success in the 1998 mid-term elections and the presidential race in 2000.

Arch conservatives both inside and outside the Republican party have long made clear their almost visceral dislike of a man who symbolises for them their loss of the "culture wars", which pits "traditional family values" against the "decadent liberalism" spawned in the 1960s.

Finally, there is the prosecutor. Mr Starr is certainly intelligent and able, but he is also a conservative, Republican activist who owes his legal and judicial attainments to the sponsorship of the Reagan and Bush administrations.

There may be no vast, right-wing conspiracy, but only because conservative Republicans have never made much secret of their determination to "get" Clinton in any way they could. Does anyone seriously believe that Starr's investigation would have lasted four years if the philandering president had been a Republican? Dr Robert J McKeever. Department of Politics, University of Reading.

WHAT good did it do former president Jimmy Carter to be apparently free of sexual indiscretions? The urge to destroy will find a reason in the very air. E Townley. Bedlington, Northumberland.

Hands off

OF course teachers are "in loco parentis" when they supervise young children's play in the blazing sun (Leader, August 15). That is why they have welcomed the proposed publication of guidelines designed to protect them from malicious accusations, and children from the unwelcome attentions of a tiny minority of abusive teachers. Our files show, sadly, that these situations arise with disturbing frequency.

A prudent parent takes care and precautions, and expects others, on their behalf, to avoid situations that put their children at risk. A sensible profession also protects its own integrity. Doctors operate with similar guidelines in relation to intimate examinations. Should teachers suffer from malicious allegations without the benefit of equally scrupulous rules?

Teachers do, and will continue to, emphasise the importance of sun screen to reduce the risk of skin cancer. Children will still be urged to rub protective creams on to their arms and legs — even five-year-olds can do this.

Teachers will exhibit and supervise the self-application of sun screen — but they must recognise that they run a real risk if, for instance, they rub the tops of the thighs of six-year-olds in the name of health education. Better for all if they stay "hands off". I have no doubt that parents will welcome this small, but important, clarification.

Neil Fletcher. Head of Education, Local Government Association.

Come clean

MY old friend Hilary Wainwright continues to spend much of her time criticising the Labour Party. I have always wondered, if we are worthy of so much attention, why she has not joined us.

But no matter. My point is that the Grass Roots Alliance is neither grass roots nor centre-left as it claims. Its three candidates for the NEC elections are all prominent long-standing members of factions which have been in and around since the 1970s and before and are in varying degrees opposed to the party leadership, whether it be Callaghan, Kimock, Smith or Blair.

Why don't they just come clean and say so. I don't like members to be misled. Tom Sawyer. General secretary, The Labour Party, London.

Cover price

IT was with the greatest dismay that we heard of the British Library's proposals to introduce an annual admission charge of £300 per reader. We believe the introduction would undermine the purpose of the Library as defined in the 1972 Act. We also believe it would radically alter the Library's fundamental character by betraying the egalitarian tradition on which it was founded.

The British Library is, according to its Strategic Review Consultation Paper, "a store serving everyone who needs access to it". But the proposals would limit free access to a few days a year.

The proposals would not even solve the Library's financial difficulties. The Consultation Paper states that, on the best estimates, the charges would account for less than one-third of the Library's projected annual shortfall.

Peter Ackroyd. Farrie A.H. Michael Foot. Frank Kermode. Doris Lessing. Hilary Wainwright. Fay Weldon. Francis Whelan. And six others.

Help the living

CLAP my hands to applaud Decca Aitkenhead (Leave the dead alone, There are enough living victims who need help, August 14). I'm one of them. And it makes me so angry to read that the Criminal Cases Review Commission is using its limited resources on "hanged peoples' cases rather than those languishing in jail today. Ten long years I have campaigned to have my case reopened and wrongful conviction quashed.

When the CCRU took over the M26 Three cases from the Home Office it was asked to deal with it urgently. At the time I was on a hunger strike and prepared to die in protest at the continuous delays. The commission responded that my case would be dealt with as a priority, so I ended my protest. That was 16 months ago. Now CCRU resources are being concentrated on the dead, rather than the living hundreds of innocent prisoners who can be saved.

Raphael Rowe. RMP Kingston, Portsmouth.

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a telephone number. We may edit letters.

Simple remedy for homeopathy's doubters

IT is not surprising that the debate around complementary medicine is becoming "ill-informed and misleading", when journalists like Catherine Bennett (No Alternative, August 15) base their opinions of homeopathy on the views of 19th-century savants, instead of modern research. Three reviews of clinical research in homeopathy have been published in the 1990s, all with positive conclusions. This research is not hard to find, having been published by the British Medical Journal, The Lancet, and the European Commission.

Professor Ernst, whom she quotes approvingly, has published a review which shows that homeopathy works in post-operative complications, and there is an organisation called Homeopaths without Frontiers, which has done clinical trials on homeopathic treatment of cholera in Peru and malaria in Ghana. Dr Peter Fisher. Medical director, London Homeopathic Hospital.

research of treatments. There have been some recent publications in mainstream medical journals. One significant difference with conventional medical research is funding. Whereas many of the trials of new and existing drugs are funded by the pharmaceutical industry, there is no large multinational corporation with an interest in researching homeopathy.

Eleanor Weatherley-Jones. University of Sheffield.

THIS swing toward alternative healing is happening in a grassroots way. The advertising budget for, say, Wella, which makes homeopathic products, must be minuscule compared to that of pharmaceuticals. "Gullible" members of the public are talking to one another, exchanging anecdotes: mums in school playgrounds recommending bryonia for dry coughs or tea tree oil for head lice. Which indicates that more and more people are screening out commercial pressures and dubious statistics and exchanging information based on their own experience. Which seems to me to be the opposite of gullibility.

Mutabar Williams. Leves, E Sussex.

An angel in search of a guardian.

The thought that someone cares about your everyday welfare can be a very comforting one.

Especially in the developing world where poverty and ill health are so much a part of growing up.

By sponsoring a child like Joshi through ActionAid you can offer a community a way forward.

With your support we can help provide children and their families with access to safe, clean water, health care and education.

These essentials make a difference to their everyday lives now and are vital in their fight to become self-sufficient in the future.

As a sponsor, you'll see how your money is working through regular updates from our field workers and messages from the child you sponsor.

Contact us today and we'll send you an information pack with a photo of a child awaiting your sponsorship.

Fill in the coupon and become a much needed guardian angel.

Please send me further details about sponsoring a child, or call 01460 61073.

☐ No interest in sponsoring in Africa ☐ Asia ☐ Where need is greatest ☐

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms
Address _____
Postcode _____

Tel (Day) _____ (Eve) _____
I can't sponsor a child now, but enclose gift of: ☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ £ _____
Make cheques / POs payable to ActionAid, FREEPOST BS4868, Chard, Somerset TA20 1BR

ACTIONAID

Julian Green

Confessions of a novelist

JULIAN Green, who has died aged 57, defined his writings as "telling myself about myself". The works ranged from novels and plays to an autobiography and a 15-volume *Journal*. The latter — longer than Tolstoy's — covered three-quarters of a century and set a record in world literature.

World literature, too, is the right context in which to judge Green. His novels were enthusiastically reviewed by Karl Jung, Hermann Hesse and Arthur Koestler. Surprisingly, there is no entry about him in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*. Among his literary admirers were TS Eliot, André Gide, Malcolm Lowry, George Orwell and Rainer Maria Rilke. However his books were allowed to slip out of print, although, during recent years, a rescue operation was mounted by Quartet and Marion Boyars. In 1971 he was the first foreigner to be elected to the Académie Française, to fill the place left by François Mauriac's death.

Born in Paris of American parents, Julian had six sisters and one brother, he was to spend most of his life in France. He was educated at a French lycée, and always referred to Paris as "my city" — a city, which he was to notice, was shaped like a human brain. His father was a businessman from Virginia, and his mother, May-Adelaide Hartridge, a belle from Savannah; both were fiercely proud of their Southern blood. They were Protestants, and each day his mother would read to the children a passage from the Bible. She died when Julian was 14. Then, at 16, he decided to become a Catholic, only to learn that his father had secretly taken the same step a few months before.

During his teens, Julian had shown yearnings to be a Christian martyr, a Benedictine novice at Quarr Abbey, and a saint like Francis of Assisi (whose life he was to write). A saying of the saint that he never forgot was: "Do not canonise me too quickly. I am still capable of begetting children." In Green's *Journal* he reminds himself: "Saints do not have wings."

He had a powerful religious imagination, and during the first world war when he saw a

convoy of Fiat ambulances (he was an ambulance driver on the Italian front), their names immediately prompted him to think of the Lord's Prayer, with its invocation *Fiat voluntas tua* (Thy will be done). His was the apostolic zeal of the new convert — though between the two world wars there was to be a longish lapse in the practice of his religion. Yet his faith in God and the Bible, which he taught himself to read in Hebrew, never wavered.

The lapse was brought about by his homosexuality, of which he only became aware when he attended the University of Virginia, and in 1920 heard a classics professor speak of the unnatural practices of the Ancient World — by which the lecturer had meant "boy-love". Suddenly Green found him-

Green maintained that his best book was his *Journal*. Time and again in its entries he unflinchingly bared his soul

self confronting a problem which was to overshadow the rest of his life. The battle between his carnal and spiritual desires had begun.

In his third novel, *The Dark Journey* (1929), there is a scene where Angèle, a teenage prostitute, lingers in the chapel of St Jude and reflects nostalgically on the days of her innocence. After reading the book, André Gide had said to the author, who was some 40 years his junior: "Your novel is a projection of yourself." In 1973 Green confessed in his autobiography: "Angèle was me." He admitted to his early prurience on the Paris streets in search of boys.

Gide and Green were poles apart in matters of belief — though as writers they had much in common. When the surrealists had muttered "automatic writing" about Green's novel *Midnight* (1936) in which the author had explored the world of dreams, Gide had nodded approvingly, for he too knew what control

and inner stillness were needed to produce such writing. Again, if Gide frequently chided the younger man about his religious views, especially after his return to the Church in 1939, then that was part of their sparring and ongoing friendship. Green wrote after Gide's death in 1951, and when Mauriac in *Le Figaro* said that Gide had chosen the path of evil, Green was shocked. In his *Journal* he remarked: "What does Mauriac know about it? Only God can make a final judgment."

For Green, life without belief was inconceivable. If another world did not exist, he might as well commit suicide. Alone in a room he had sometimes heard thousands of voices singing in harmony and felt the universe was bathed in happiness. Blake and the early mystics were among his bedside books. Gide had informed him many years before that he had the temperament of a visionary and that he must never deny such a gift.

Much of Green's fiction was a study of men and women adrift from God. Many of his characters meet with violent ends. Nearly all his books, with the exception of *Memoirs of Happy Days* (1942), were written in French. To make it possible for him to be elected to the Académie Française, he had been given French citizenship while being allowed to retain his American citizenship — a unique honour.

In the 1930s, in homage to his mother, he had planned a trilogy in which he would incorporate what she had told him about the American Civil War and the role of the South. But when *Gone with the Wind* came out, he put aside the manuscript, believing that its themes were too similar. Then, in the 1960s, he took down the old manuscript and completed his trilogy. *The Distant Lands* (1960) and *The Stars of the South* (1966) have appeared here. The third volume, *Die*, which has come out in France, still waits to be translated. More than a million copies of the first two have been sold. His play *South*, covering some of the same territory, was produced by Peter Hall in London at the Arts Theatre Club in 1965. Green's most highly thought of novels were *Moira* (1961) and *Each in his Dark-*



Julian Green... confronting the battle between his carnal and spiritual desires

ness (1961), both set in America between the two world wars and concerned with ambisexual men. Their tortured sex lives are sympathetically examined and DH Lawrence's phrase about being "crucified in sex" comes to mind. In the first novel a key statement is: "Joseph wanted her body, but the body led to Hell if one gave in to it." In this case it leads as well to rape, murder and the electric chair. In the second novel, William's befriending of a religious psychopath results in him being shot by him but in his last conscious moments William forgives his murderer. The title of the book was taken from Victor Hugo — and in full reads: "Each

man in his darkness goes towards the light." The novels offer variations on the paradox that God can write straight with crooked lines even with sins. Moreover, it was to this theme that Green returned in *The Other One* (1973), the last novel which he was to set in this century. In 1939 a French lapsed Catholic and libertine seduces a Danish girl of 18, and after the war he tracks her down in Copenhagen, having regained his faith and in the hope that one day she will become a convert. He himself meanwhile anticipates joining a religious order. But during their reunion they become lovers once more — if only briefly. After this departure, she is left to weigh up all that has happened and comes slowly to the conclusion that sometimes a heart such as hers has "to be broken so that God can enter it." God becomes for her "the other one".

To those who criticised Green's plots as being too contrived, religious or melodramatic, he provided an answer in his *Journal*. There he noted how six years after *Moira* had been published, the American newspapers had run a similar story about an ardent young Protestant and Bible enthusiast, who had raped a girl of 20 and then

murdered her. Yet to send such a man to the electric chair, argued Green, was barbarous, since a man who committed sexual crime was incapable of reasoning at the moment he perpetrated the act: rather, he was "a lunatic" who needed locking up in an asylum. In Green's writings sexual acts were invariably described in terms of "frenzy" and "madness." On one occasion he declared: "Passions darkened the soul." Certainly a strong streak of Jansenism and Puritanism left its mark on his fiction.

Julian Green maintained that his best book was his *Journal*. Time and again in its entries he unflinchingly bared his soul. In the ranks of confessional writers he won for himself a place among the greatest. Many of his thoughts were on a level with Pascal. Here are three: "Faith means walking on the water." "Even if I go down as far as Hell, God's arm is long enough to pull me up again." "To be ready to die for someone you have never seen before, that is the whole of Christianity."

Neville Braybrooke

Julian Green, novelist, born September 6, 1900; died August 13, 1998

Patrick Bailey

How to put your subject on the map

PATRICK Bailey, who has died aged 72, was one of this country's best known and most loved geographers. An effective but modest practitioner, he became a wise expert in many aspects of the teaching of geography in British schools. Indeed, one of his greatest achievements was the launch of Teaching Geography, which he edited from 1974-85 and nurtured into the UK's leading journal in its field, one with a respected and enviable international reputation.

From early on, he was an innovator. Two of his strongest beliefs were that maps and fieldwork enabled students to visualise and understand an area much more than mere words. Fieldwork with Patrick was full of surprises. He would announce an excellent vantage point from the top of the next church tower, well before it came into view. His students would then climb it and Patrick would provide a lucid explanation of the surrounding landscape via a beautifully clear field sketch.

He wrote a handbook for geography teachers, also called *Teaching Geography* (1974), which became a bible in its time. In this he demonstrated his trademark — blackboard panoramas and oblique air views of geographical scenes sketched in coloured chalks. Few ideas are genuinely original in today's world, but this surely was. His last book was *The Geography Teachers' Handbook* (1996).

His interest in geography was first aroused in Yorkshire when, evacuated from London to Marske in Swaledale, he explored the Pennines on foot and by bike. From school at Scarborough College he joined the Royal Navy, and as a 19-year-old able seaman was photographed walking in devastated Hiroshima.

It was the navy which also developed his love of world travel, leading him to read geography from 1947-51 at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and then McGill University, Montreal. He joined the Geographical Association (GA) in 1953 having started his career as a schoolteacher in Norfolk. From 1964-68 he was principal lecturer in geography at the new Northumbria College of Education, Newcastle, before moving to the University of Leicester School of Education where he was in charge of geographical education.

With a colleague at Leicester he instigated two outstanding and never-repeated major African expeditions when, in 1974 the P&O school's cruise ship *Norwich* and in 1977 the *Uganda* (later the Falklands War hospital ship), were privately chartered to follow a route round the coast of West Africa. Hundreds of British sixth formers will never forget their experiences in Sierra

Leone, Senegal and the Gambia, especially when their 17,000 ton liner navigated to their ship without the aid of charts to be greeted by an African band playing Scottish airs on bagpipes.

He was president of the GA when Sir Keith Joseph initiated the public debate on the national curriculum. In one of Patrick Bailey's most valuable and far-reaching contributions to geography, he co-authored the GA's response, "The Case for Geography". This argued the importance of the subject's place in schools.

As geography as a subject became more humanised and sociological, in danger of abandoning the physical side to the geologists, Patrick Bai-



Bailey... field trips

ley believed that "Physical geography is geography's bedrock. To abandon it or fail to give it due importance would be to diminish the educational value of the entire subject."

After retirement from the School of Education in Leicester he continued to teach and became well known on the international scene, forging links with geographers in Poland and Portugal. He received honorary membership of the GA in 1987 and earlier this year from the Royal Geographical Society.

In his last 18 months, he had battled against debilitating illness, fortified by the Christian Science Church, at whose services he was often the accompanying pianist. However, he never gave up working for his beloved geography, the GA and the RGS, and encouraging his colleagues and friends to do likewise.

His illness worsened he still insisted on giving public lectures, his final one being last autumn. He never lost his impish humour, for with standby lecturers at the ready, Patrick commented that it was good "to know a fall-back — or fall down — position was in place."

He is survived by his wife Peggy, whom he met in Northumberland and married in 1968.

Paul Brydson

Patrick John Mumford Bailey, geographer, born December 31, 1925; died July 16, 1998

Letter: Derek Newark

Harold Pinter writes: It was a great shock to read of the death of Derek Newark (*obituary August 14*). I worked with him twice. He played Ajax in *The Trojan War* will not take place at the National and in *Roots* in my play *The Hot House* in the theatre and on television. He was a great comic actor. I have never laughed so much in my life as I did at the reading of *The Hot House* at Hampstead when his outraged exasperation with the crassness of those around him assumed

monumental proportions. It was all out of my seat at Ayrickbourn's *Bedroom Farce* when the piece of furniture he had taken Derek ages to construct collapsed in front of him. Twenty-five years ago this maugis of used car dumps and gravel diggings had been the inspiration for my book *The Unofficial Countryside*. In July my ward passed on the stewardship of the London Wildlife Trust, and I felt it was time for another visit. Late summer is the heyday for urban wildernesses and the meadow was looking gorgeous, not so say gaily. Somehow a garden variety of *Veronica spicata* had become the dominant flower, and the shoals of grasses and rushes were lit up by fuzzy spikes of brilliant blue. It kept company with golden rod from North America and Jacob's ladder from the Mediterranean, and with a host of native damp-land plants, including purple loosestrife, common heath and immense castellations of teasels, all dancing with gatekeeper and meadow brown butterflies. It's the jostling together

A Country Diary

WEST MIDDLESEX: Readers may remember my *Battered* surprise last year at discovering that a strip of rough grassland in the Colne valley had been christened Mabey's Meadow. Twenty-five years ago this maugis of used car dumps and gravel diggings had been the inspiration for my book *The Unofficial Countryside*. In July my ward passed on the stewardship of the London Wildlife Trust, and I felt it was time for another visit. Late summer is the heyday for urban wildernesses and the meadow was looking gorgeous, not so say gaily. Somehow a garden variety of *Veronica spicata* had become the dominant flower, and the shoals of grasses and rushes were lit up by fuzzy spikes of brilliant blue. It kept company with golden rod from North America and Jacob's ladder from the Mediterranean, and with a host of native damp-land plants, including purple loosestrife, common heath and immense castellations of teasels, all dancing with gatekeeper and meadow brown butterflies. It's the jostling together

of old, new, native and exotic that makes the vegetation of these urban-fringe habitats so special. Later I took off on a nostalgic ramble among the cuttings and bottle-tips. I was astonished by how wonderfully rampant the vegetation had become over the two decades. There were oriental thickets of buddleia, hollyhock and russian vine, and hidden flashes, with waiting ferns and mats of water-lily, like balls of molten wax. It was good, too, to see so many kids playing in the thick of it — a salutary reminder of what a pitifully myopic adjective "brownfield" is for these sites.

RICHARD MABEY

Birthdays

Ginger Baker, rock drummer, 58; Gordon Brand Jr, golfer, 40; Bill Clinton, US president, 52; Lord Cocks of Hartcliffe, former Labour chief whip, 89; John Deacon, guitarist and songwriter, 48; Mary Joe Fernandez, tennis player, 27; Dame Rose Heilbron, former high court judge, 84; Prof Sir David Hopwood, geneticist, 66; Richard Ingrams, editor, the

Oldie, 61; Billy J Kramer, pop singer, 55; David Lodge, novelist, 77; the Rt Rev Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester, 50; Dr Elizabeth Shore, former president, Medical Women's Federation, 71; Jill St John, actress, 58; Willie Shoemaker, former jockey, 67; John Mark Taylor, Conservative MP, 57; Henry Wyndham, chairman, Sotheby's, 45.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

OUR COVERAGE of the Edinburgh Festival and other things, Page 9, 2, yesterday, included a photograph of the three members of "the Martinez family", all full-frontally naked. A headline above the picture promised, "The Martinez family get on stage, strip off and confess all." This is not the case. The strip was for the purposes of the publicity picture only.

trated with a photograph captioned, Casual labour: Peter Rouse takes a relaxed approach at work. Unfortunately the picture showed neither Peter Rouse nor his office. It was a library picture, wrongly identified when filed. Apologies for any embarrassment caused.

THERE was a mistake in yesterday's correction to the article about Alger Hiss in *GA*, August 6. We said Hiss was charged with espionage when what we meant to say

was "Hiss was not charged with espionage, but he was prosecuted for perjury."

It is the policy of the *Guardian* to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 5589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Letters to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 118, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 5957. E-mail: readers@guardian.co.uk

Death Notices

BROWN. Dr Joyce Iris Chamberlain, died August 12, beloved wife of David and mother of Sheila, Liz and Paul. Family bereaved only.

COLLIE. On 17th August 1998 Dr Ian Fisher Collie, dear and devoted father to Keith, Penny, Robert and Emma, died peacefully after a brief illness. Griefed by all. Buried at 11am on 19th August at Putney Vale Crematorium. Donations to The Prince of Wales, West End Lane, Essex, KT10 9NA.

GRANDGER. Marjorie Arnold, on 12th August aged 80, poet and writer, much loved by a large family, including three grandsons. Buried at 11am at Putney Vale Crematorium.

TEEDS. John Harold Starwood, died peacefully on August 18th, at 82, at House Nursing Home, aged 82. Dear father of Janet and Peter, grandfather of Janet and Nicholas, and great-grandfather of Emily and John. Funeral service to be held on Friday, 21st August at 12.30pm at St. Mary's Church, Putney. Donations to Westbury Parish Church, 10, Westbury Road, Putney, London SW15 2NU.

Births

BRANNAN. To Gail and Garry (Barry). A beautiful son Harry born on 11th August 1998. 1113 place your announcement, telephone 0171 13 5601 or fax 0171 73 4707 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.

Yet another way to save money with British Gas. If you buy both your gas and electricity from us, you could start by saving around 12% on your electricity bill. To find out more about great savings from British Gas, call 0445 55 55 15.

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مكتبة القرآن

Russia's banking system faces disaster, 12

Tomorrow: Rentokil makes a killing

Executive Financial Editor: Ben Clissitt
Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-238-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

FinanceGuardian

High pound cuts import costs and brings first retail deflation in 25 years

Prices drop in the shops

Mark Atkinson
Economics Correspondent

THE strength of the pound cutting the cost of imported goods led to falling prices on the High Street last month for the first time in a quarter of a century, according to figures published yesterday.

Overall, prices in the shops — excluding food, drink, tobacco and petrol — fell by 0.1 per cent in July compared to last year, said the Office for National Statistics — the first time there has been core goods price deflation since the category was first compiled in January 1987. City analysts said rough estimates suggested that retail goods prices had not fallen year-on-

year since 1973. Clothing and footwear prices fell by 6 per cent between June and July, the biggest fall for a July on record, said the ONS.

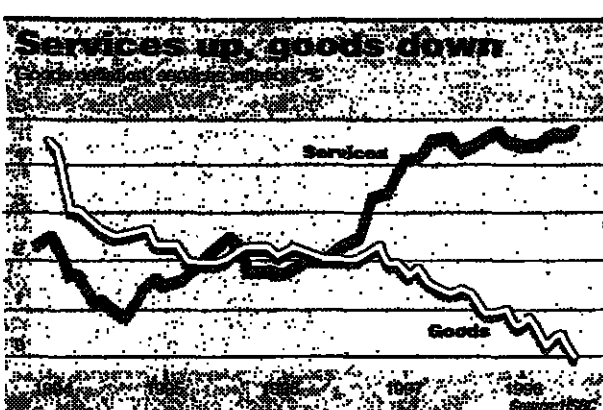
Cheaper motoring costs as a result of last year's Budget rises in excise duty on petrol falling out of the figures also exerted a downward influence on prices.

As well as the strong pound, the weakness of goods prices in July reflected big discounting by retailers in an effort to shift unsold stock. But analysts said the arrival of falling goods prices in the UK was also due to the more lasting deflationary impact of the Asian economic crisis and tumbling oil prices, which have flooded world markets with cheap products and commodities.

Economy-wide falling prices have become commonplace in China and South East Asia while the rate of price increases in the West has slowed sharply.

In America, consumer price inflation is running at just 1.5 per cent so far this year, according to data published yesterday. Given that the US measure of inflation is reckoned to overstate the rate of price increases, then prices are probably stable if not falling, say analysts.

Despite cheaper goods, the cost of living is continuing to go up as a result of the rising cost of services, which increased by 3.3 per cent in the year to July, up from 3.2 per cent in June. The all-items retail price index rose by 3.5 per cent in the year, down from 3.7 per cent in June.



Excluding mortgage interest payments, underlying inflation, which is used by the Bank of England as its benchmark when setting interest rates, fell from 2.8 per cent to 2.6 per cent, a whisker above the Government's 2.5 per cent target. There was further good

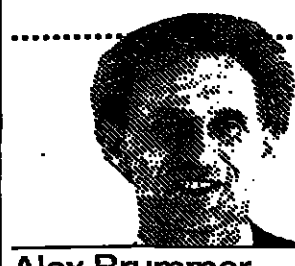
news for the Government in the shape of a flood of tax receipts in July which helped send the public finances into the black by £5.4 billion, taking the cumulative surplus for the first four months of 1998-99 to £0.1 billion against a deficit of £4.3 billion in the same period last year.

Total tax revenue was almost 11 per cent higher than last July. Income tax receipts surged as people rushed to beat the July deadline for self assessment payments and corporation tax payments were boosted by quarterly payments of advance corporation tax. VAT receipts were the highest on record.

Meanwhile, central government spending continued to rise only moderately in the year to date. In July it increased by 3.15 per cent.

Notebook

Counting cost of tunnel vision



Alex Brummer

HAVING turned the inflation target into the totem of UK economic management, it is hard to believe that the Bank of England will move soon to ease its monetary policy.

This in some respects is disturbing. Not simply because it means that the pound is likely to remain strong, keeping untoward pressure on the export sector, but because it masks an even more important economic trend — that of deflation.

Within the UK's latest prices figures is evidence that the deflation trend out of the Far East and elsewhere has arrived on the high street with a vengeance. The overall inflation rate for retail goods fell 0.1 per cent last month from 0.3 plus in June.

Estimates made by brokers Salomon Smith Barney suggest that these are the weakest high-street price numbers since the series began in 1988 and that retail goods prices have not been negative for a quarter of a century. If there is an inflation problem in the UK it is only evident in the over buoyant services sector.

Britain is not alone in experiencing a degree of deflation. The latest prices numbers from the US show inflation running at a minimal annual rate of 1.5 per cent, even though the economy is still bowling along.

There are not similar deflation signals from the rest of the European Union either, with the Bundesbank reporting that inflation rates range from 0.8 per cent in Austria to 1 per cent in Germany and 2.7 per cent in Portugal.

This combination of relatively healthy growth among Western economies and low inflation has largely been created on the backs of problems elsewhere — the severe difficulties in the Asian economy, the crisis in Russia and the plunge in the oil price which is causing its own difficulties in the Middle East.

If anything, a downward spiral in prices spreading from the weaker emerging market economies to the G7 is among the biggest risks facing the global economy.

Deflation, could, over the medium-term, until the global economy adjusts, have serious consequences. Initially, it might be thought that central banks might lower interest rates to adjust to a new situation, but their inherent conservatism means they are just as likely to adjust down targets for price stability, so restricting demand. Once the deflationary spiral gains hold it may prove difficult for governments to spend out of it because of self-imposed fiscal disciplines, like those within Europe.

The political difficulty in confronting deflation, which is a novel event over the last three decades, has been admitted.

rably demonstrated in Japan where the authorities have been so resistant to taking the radical steps to end the downward spiral by refloating the economy through permanent tax cuts and selling government bills.

This may all seem remote for a Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee seeking to take on rising average earnings. But in a deflating economy, particularly one with flexible labour markets, even wage levels could start to fall.

Mutual friends

THE Friends Provident takeover of the London and Manchester Group is an unusual twist on a late 1990s tale. Much of the activity in the financial sector over the last two or three years has been about mutuals turning into quoted companies or being taken over by ples. The Halifax with its raids on Clerical Medical and Birmingham Midshires has been among the more aggressive players in the financial services sector.

Out of the blue comes Friends Provident, whose chief executive Keith Satchell has made no secret of his expansion plans and he has demonstrated his opportunism. Some of the shine has come off the price of financial services groups this summer, making takeovers in the sector a possibility again. There must be some concern in Satchell's mind — and that of the financial advisers to the deal Merrill Lynch — that the knowledge that L&M is in play will attract further interest.

Not that L&M, the 33rd biggest insurer in the UK market, is such a wonderful buy. The brand lacks some of the resonance of the bigger players. The company only recently has come to grips with its pensions mis-selling liabilities and, in distribution terms, it is one of the few operators in the UK market still involved in industrial insurance — the polite name for the door-to-door selling which made the man from the Pru such an institution in British life. Such selling has been problematical for all the life companies because of the difficulty in exercising control over the doorstep salesman.

Nevertheless, the addition of a substantial chunk of new premium business (some £346 million was written by L&M in 1997) will be useful to Friends Provident as will the additional distribution and branding, ahead of the changes in the savings sector which are coming with individual savings accounts and stakeholder pensions. There will be ample opportunity to take costs out, which will mean job losses at L&M headquarters in Exeter.

The really interesting question is Friends Provident's long-term strategy. It already has a link into the plc market-place through its 63.3 per cent holding in fund manager Ivory & Sims. The suspicion must be that it is bulking up ahead of some bolder move into the plc arena, despite all the 11p-service paid to mutuals.

Retailers' brave face fails to hide the gloom

Roger Cowe

SHOPKEEPERS know more about prices and demand than any government economist or statistician.

This has been a tough summer for them, although most small shopkeepers insist that they are doing fine — it's the others who are suffering.

But this may involve rosy hindsight, as in the case of the man running a menswear shop on Upper Street in Islington, north London. He insisted he had had a good year, although he had heard horror stories elsewhere. But a competitor up the road claimed the shopkeeper had, in fact, gone bankrupt a few months ago and re-emerged under a different facade.

John Conley of Jakas, another Upper-Street clothes shop, acknowledged that he has seen better summers.

"It's been a difficult year, but not that desperate", he said. "There are plenty of people buying but they have been more careful." Gary Lincoln, the buyer for two Diverse shops up the road, said smaller, specialist operations such as his could cope more easily with economic turbulence than the big stores.

But he admitted business was better earlier in the year than in the last couple of months. "We buy a year ahead and sell until we have got nothing left."



Sale signs indicate trend... even specialist outlets, like Islington's Diverse menswear, are feeling the pinch

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

mostly at full price", he said. "If it's right, people round here will buy. There's plenty of money around. We have sold 250 pairs of combat trousers at £90 a throw."

There are plenty of bargains on offer in the sales though. At Marks & Spencer, £60 skirts are on offer at £18. A stall just outside offers three shirts for £10.

Jeff Heller, running a stall on the nearby Chapel Market, gave a brutal assessment of the summer. "We had a few good weeks

but when it mattered in June and July it was desperate. Prices are lower than last year. I keep finding places to buy with better prices."

On the other side of London, in the Elephant and Castle shopping centre, the story was much the same.

The proprietor of the Sensational menswear shop said 30 years' experience told him recession was on the way. "I knew by Easter it wasn't right. In fact Christmas wasn't right, and a week after Christmas it

completely tailed off. We are fighting to stand still. I don't see the rest of the year being good, and having been through about six recessions in 30 years, I'd say the chances of recession over the next six to eight months are pretty high."

Although they haven't put prices up, the price they pay for materials has fallen.

It is the manufacturing sector which is struggling most with the challenge of deflation. The pound's strength is eating into export markets while they face tough competition at home and are being forced to cut prices.

Again, says Mr Loyne, the squeeze comes after a period of widening margins, because of the pound's rapid decline when it left the Exchange Rate Mechanism in September 1992. "They had it the other way for quite a long time. It was inevitable it wouldn't last. They should have taken action on productivity while they had the opportunity."



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Consumers gain as manufacturers struggle

Stores are flexible as productivity failures haunt factories, says Charlotte Denny

IF inflation is public enemy number one, then deflation must be the economy's best friend, right?

Wrong. Yesterday's revelation that goods prices on the high street have fallen for the first time in a quarter of a century brings closer to home the threat of a worldwide bout of 'Thirties style' deflation, which some commentators have been warning about since the Asian economies started to topple last summer.

Deflation of the kind which has swept through the former tiger economies is the sign of a sick economy and the result of inadequate spending. It

leads first to falls in employment and output and then shows up as falling prices for goods and services.

Once the price level starts falling, the economy is really in trouble. While inflation is conquered, at a price, by raising interest rates, it is more difficult to stop prices from falling by cutting interest rates. Nominal interest rates cannot fall below zero or no one would lend money.

As the Japanese are discovering, it is extremely difficult to kick-start an economy when the cost of borrowing has already fallen to 0.5 per cent. Once the price level

starts falling it becomes virtually impossible. Real interest rates — the cost of borrowing minus the change in the price level — will be higher than actual interest rates and the authorities will be unable to lower them because the nominal cost of borrowing cannot be cut further.

Widespread deflation is like a dose of negative equity for the entire economy. Anyone who has borrowed money to pay for an asset is in trouble. The value of their asset is falling, while the repayments on the loan remain the same in nominal terms.

The UK is still far removed from the nightmare of a deflationary spiral. Falling prices are as yet confined to one sector only — goods on the high street. Jonathan Loyne, UK

economist for HSBC markets, says this kind of deflation can only be good news for consumers and is not a bad sign for the economy overall. "It's in response to an exceptional fall in cost pressures due to the strength of the pound and it's offsetting stubbornly high inflation elsewhere in the services sector."

Consumers have been extremely bargain sensitive over the last year, which has forced shops to cut prices. Some of the steam has gone out of high spending after last year's frenzy financed by windfalls.

Falling prices may be good for consumers, but for the companies who have to slash margins to sell merchandise it will mean belt-tightening. Mr Loyne, however, says we should not feel too sorry for

retailers because there is scope for flexibility in the sector. "Retailers have seen widening margins over the last

year or so. Although they haven't put prices up, the price they pay for materials has fallen."

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Both Friends and L&M have sizeable exposure to the pensions mis-selling fiasco and have both been fined six-figure sums.

Friends' chief executive Keith Satchell will be chief executive of the combined insurers while L&M's chief executive Tom Pyne will become finance director.

Fed chief steers clear of stocks

Mark Tran in New York

THE chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, who once accused Wall Street of "irrational exuberance", proved he puts his money where his mouth is when he disclosed that last year he eschewed equity investments and put almost all his cash in short-term Treasury bills.

Mr Greenspan delivered his famous remark suggesting that equities were overvalued in an evening speech in New York in December 1996 and his clear warning on a frothy market promptly knocked Wall Street into a tailspin the following morning. He clearly still believes that the market has some way to fall.

The information is revealed in Mr Greenspan's annual financial disclosure forms, which he has been required to complete every year since taking over the US central bank in 1987. This is the first time he has shown where he invests his money. The forms show Mr Greenspan had at least \$2.4 million in short-term Treasury bills last year and at least \$450,000 in money-market and cash-management accounts. Mr Greenspan also held bonds worth \$600,000. His current salary is \$136,700.

Officials said that Mr Greenspan's holdings had "nothing to do with the market" or his views about it. "He does not invest in common stock because he wants to avoid conflicts of interest," said Lynn Fox, a Fed official.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS	
Australia 2.987	Germany 2.8179
Austria 18.75	Greece 473.89
Belgium 58.10	Hong Kong 12.17
Canada 2.386	India 52.618
Cyprus 0.8208	Ireland 1.1108
Denmark 10.79	Israel 5.95
Finland 8.65	Italy 2.793
France 9.41	Japan 1.5714
	Malaysia 6.79
	Malta 0.8194
	Netherlands 3.1987
	New Zealand 3.13
	Norway 12.09
	Portugal 208.86
	Saudi Arabia 5.96
	USA 1.0714
	Singapore 2.80
	South Africa 9.06
	Spain 237.82
	Sweden 12.50
	Switzerland 2.36
	Turkey 428.40
	USA 1.0714

Supplied by Reuters (excluding rupee, shatel and indoty)

700 jobs at risk as Friends offers £744m for L&M

Jill Tressnor and Rupert Jones

FRIENDS Provident executed its mutual muscles yesterday by making a £744 million bid for a listed rival, London & Manchester. Friends Provident, owned by policyholders, insisted it had no plans to seek a stock market flotation — dashing windfalls hopes for its policyholders — and will fund the acquisition from its £2.5 billion cash reserves.

The deal, which has received the backing of London & Manchester's three biggest shareholders, could lead to 700 job losses from the £500 million merger.

L&M's shareholders — the three largest of which are Schroders, Perpetual and M&G — have been offered 600p per share to take the company into private hands.

The offer, while representing an 18 per cent premium above L&M's closing price on Monday, is less than its share price 12 months ago.

London & Manchester's shares raced up 91.5p to end at 600p yesterday, amid some speculation that a rival may make a higher offer. However, London & Manchester's chairman David Hubbard, who will step down as a result of the transaction, said he thought this was unlikely.

The two insurers have been hatching the transaction for the past 10 weeks, during which time the stock market has steadily declined.

London & Manchester, which felt it was too small to go it alone, had discussed mergers with at least three other companies. It is one of the leading lights in the so-

called home service market, specialising in selling life assurance and savings policies to people on low incomes.

This business is considered unfashionable by many big groups — Prudential, Pearl and Wesleyan are among those that have scaled back or pulled out of it.

The sales forces of the combined company will work together. Friends intends to use the deal to expand L&M's position in the corporate pensions market while L&M's fund managers are expected to be integrated into Friends

Ivory & Sims, the Edinburgh-based fund management group in which Friends took a 63 per cent stake earlier this year. Its funds under management will increase from £25 billion to £30 billion.

Both Friends and L&M have sizeable exposure to the pensions mis-selling fiasco and have both been fined six-figure sums.

Friends' chief executive Keith Satchell will be chief executive of the combined insurers while L&M's chief executive Tom Pyne will become finance director.

12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

Russia in crisis

Banking system faces disaster

James Meek in Moscow

THE COLLAPSE of the rouble could spell doom for hundreds of Russia's commercial banks, with no guarantee that the government can protect even the handful who hold individual savings.

Meeting in their dachas outside Moscow at the weekend, a dozen of the country's most powerful bankers, who knew that the rouble was destined for devaluation, tried to set up an elite pool of banks that would support each other with mutual loans when required and draw on funds from the central bank if necessary.

But despite the bravado on Monday of the spokesman for the group, Vladimir Vinogradov, of Inkombank, the country's seventh biggest, it is unclear how far the central bank can, or will, back the idea.

Central bank efforts last week to help SBS-Agro, the ninth biggest bank, had little success. Yesterday Standard & Poor's, the international ratings agency, gave SBS and three other banks in the "pool" — Alfa, Inkombank and Rossiyskiy Kredit — long term credit ratings of NM for "Not Meaningful".

The only bank which the government is under popular pressure to support is Sberbank, the former Soviet state savings bank with millions of small private deposits and branches in every town and city. Many people with accounts in Sberbank saw their life savings wiped out by inflation within weeks in 1992, and to suffer the same experience would be too much, even for patient Russians to bear.

Russia's other commercial banks, of which there are about 1,500, are smaller, feebler and younger. The oldest date back to 1989, when they were allowed to open by Mikhail Gorbachev. The decision cleared the way for the rapid enrichment of a tiny number of individuals with access to income from Soviet exports.

In June, Mikhail Zadornov, the finance minister, said that if the rouble fell, as few as 30 banks could be left, or two per cent of the total.

Many say the banks deserve to die. Most are self-

serving organisations, having no contacts with ordinary savers or borrowers. They do not offer mortgages, branch networks, chequebooks, or small business loans — except at prohibitive interest rates, tens of times above inflation.

Most commercial banks work with industry, but not in the western sense. They tend to be siphons, sucking income out and using it to play the markets, which in Russia's case lately has meant buying the government's ultra-high interest-bearing bonds.

The banks' problem is that the bonds were so attractive that they borrowed dollars to buy them — dollars which they converted into roubles and, with the roubles now worth so much less, cannot afford to pay back.

Not all banks are so hollow. Some, like Mostbank, were trying to give savers and borrowers genuine services.

There is a danger that they will go down with the rotten banks, taking savings with them. Although, Sberbank aside, a banking collapse would bear no comparison to similar events in Asia or the West, there would be a considerable pain for new middle-income savers who had just begun to believe that having a bank account was normal.

The significance of Monday's devaluation was still being absorbed yesterday. The air of anarchy and emergency in the banking system at street level intensified as people's need to change their cash dollar savings into roubles for day to day spending, and their desire to turn their dwindling rouble holdings into hard currency, grew more urgent.

Despite most currency exchange points quoting the dollar at 9.5 roubles, the upper limit set by the government on Monday, there were few dollars to be had.

Bankers are being squeezed by clients in Russia and foreign creditors trying to understand the terms of the government's 90-day moratorium on repaying foreign loans to Russian commercial banks.

Ministers say the measures taken on Monday will prevent a banking crisis. Foreign investors are likely to see a cull of the weaker banks as preferable to no bank failures at all.



People queue at a bank to withdraw their money and (below) a man tries to bypass the crowd with his account document

PHOTOGRAPHS: MISHA JAPANESE

'There will be upheaval'

Food price rises are fuelling a bitter mood, discovers Tom Whitehouse in Moscow

FOR ordinary Russians,

sausages are one of the most revealing measures of post-Soviet decline. Ask a miner how much his standard of living has fallen since Boris Yeltsin moved into the Kremlin seven years ago and he tells you how many sausages his family ate per week before and how few they eat now.

The Soviet sausage, he says, was full of home-grown meat, but its Russian successor contains western gristle and fat. The sausage was also a salutary lesson in basic economics delivered yesterday by Mikhail Abramian, a Moscow butcher, as he gave customers the bad news. "I've had to raise the price of my sausages because they're all made from imported meat. It's not my fault," he said.

A brief lecture in international trade followed to prove that he was not profiting from the 20 per cent rouble devaluation on Mon-

day. "Russia doesn't produce meat any more. We buy sausage ingredients from abroad and have to pay in dollars. Now I need more dollars to buy these ingredients. That's why the price of my sausages has to go up," he said.

More than half of Russia's food is imported. Traders yesterday ignored government threats to punish them if they raised prices and did what they had to by passing on rising costs to customers.

Shopping provides damning proof of the failure of "reform" for most Russians. Flirtation with the West, its food and financial habits, is ending in tears. "Our government has gone mad with this money business," said Sophia Rodionova, a pensioner. "What have dollars got to do with me. I spit on dollars. I've never had any. I survive on a worthless pension."

The rouble's fall came just as some were beginning

to trust it. After three years of currency calm, rouble bank deposits worth \$25 billion (\$16 billion) are held in banks. Their owners have seen the value of their savings fall a quarter.

"If you saved roubles you were stupid," said Nadezhda Abramovskaya, a shop manager re-opening her imported bottled beer. "No one takes the rouble seriously."

Those who kept dollars under the mattress are better off, but supplies will dwindle as costs mount. A conservative estimate, assuming no further rouble collapse, has Russian inflation rising from seven per cent to 26 per cent this year.

"People can't and won't pay 30 per cent more for their food," said Henryk Kasparian, a food importer. "There will be upheaval. There has to be."



Footsie hits high as dealers refuse to panic

Laurie Laird

THE FTSE 100 posted its biggest points gain yesterday as financial dealers pushed share prices higher and refused to be panicked by the Russian crisis.

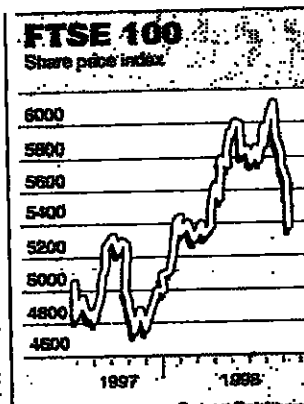
While the benchmark Russian index fell another 9 per cent in response to Monday's de facto rouble devaluation and debt moratorium, shares from the leading eastern European bourses — which tend to look to Russia for a few managers to remain in the black — leading Hungarian shares rose marginally, as did those in Poland.

But the real excitement was

in western Europe, where London jumped 181 points to 5648. Shares in Germany, perhaps the market most exposed to Russia, added more than 2 per cent while the Paris benchmark jumped 3.5 per cent.

This came after the US market set the pace, rallying on Monday evening in response to the Russian news and carrying those gains into yesterday's session. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was up nearly 90 points two hours before the close.

Dealers were impressed with the resilience of the UK market in the face of another international crisis, though most insist that sentiment remains fragile. Most say



they are unwilling to play the market aggressively until li-

quidity returns after the holidays. With trading volume likely to be light for the next few weeks, the Footsie could swing widely either way.

Battered Asian markets also took the Russian news in their stride. The Nikkei 225 gained more than 200 points to end at 15,063.79, while markets in East Asia fell only modestly compared to the standards of the past year.

Most encouraging was the slight 18 point fall in Hong Kong's Hang Seng index. Hong Kong investors did not get a chance to react to the Russian news as the market was closed for a holiday on Monday. Hong Kong is considered the next potential devaluation candidate.

Unions offer way out of Rover row

David Gow Industrial Editor

LONGER holidays at reduced rates of pay is 39,000-strong workforce is prepared to pay to accept the embattled car firm's plans for 1,500 redundancies, union leaders will tell company executives today.

Senior union officials will again reject the company's radical plans for a "working time account" under which production staff work a 4-day, 33-hour week for the rest of this year with no loss of earnings — and work off the "banked up" days next year with no extra pay.

Rover's chairman, Walter Hasselkus, has warned that he will be seeking further redundancies if unions do not agree to more flexible working time as practised at the German plants of the car firm's owner, BMW.

Union leaders are desperate to avoid a dispute with

Rover and BMW at a time when the recession in UK manufacturing threatens to turn into a slump. According to one senior official, the unions are prepared to offer substantial concessions to protect jobs and output. But they want these to conform to the existing deal on flexible working.

If they gave the employees extra holidays and not all of these at the full rate, that would be a way of getting the savings and "down time" in production that the company wants, one said. "We recognise the influence of BMW and won't do anything that threatens their commitment to Rover."

Rover officials said the company understood union concern over the proposed "working time account" and accepted there were "several ways to skin a cat." But shop stewards in the main union, the TGWU, are said to be vehemently opposed to the company plans.

Stoy fined over Supergun firm

Dan Atkinson

ACCOUNTANTS Stoy Hayward are to pay fines and costs of £750,000 for failing to spot a near-£3 million fraud at Iraqi Supergun firm Astra Holdings. Two accountants involved in auditing Astra were fined a total of £3,000.

The penalties mark the outcome of a three-year investigation into Stoy's role by the accountancy profession's disciplinary machine. Outstanding are hearings into the roles of two Astra directors who were also accountants; Stoy, while accepting the disciplinary findings, said it felt a more rounded picture would have emerged had the directors been dealt with at the same time.

Astra, which supplied propellant for dictator Saddam Hussein's long-range Supergun strategic cannon, became insolvent in 1992, triggering a Department of Trade and Industry investigation and adding to the furore surrounding

Britain's arms-to-Iraq controversy. After the crash, it emerged Astra's profits had been overstated for years and that it had deceived its auditors, shareholders and creditors, falsely puffing up profits by a total of £2.7 million over four years.

Stoy, auditors to Astra, had failed to spot the accountancy fiddles and its "competence and/or efficiency fell below the standard reasonably to be expected of a member firm of the accountancy profession in good standing in the normal course of their profession or business."

There is no suggestion Stoy deliberately turned a blind eye to accountancy irregularities. Managing partner Adrian Martin said expectations of auditors had changed dramatically since the 1980s and that Stoy was being judged by current standards. Stoy partner Paul Smith was fined £1,500 for Astra-related failings, as was former Stoy partner Philip Rusted.

News in brief

US firm buys up recruiter

THE Robert Walters finance and technology recruitment group has agreed to be taken over by US group StaffMark.

Although the shares, floated on the back of a boom in City recruitment two years ago, increased their value fivefold in 18 months, they have since halved over fears that a UK recession would hit profits. Analysts said it followed warnings by US industry leaders Kelly Girl and Manpower that they were not hitting quarterly targets.

On Monday, the group was valued at \$28.4 million, but StaffMark's offer of 429.5p a share values it at \$110 million and gives upset shareholders an exit.

Newsquest is upbeat

NEWQUEST reported that classified and display advertising remain strong while the fledgling Internet business is halfway to completion and set to contribute "meaningful revenues". The regional newspaper group, which announced last year profits of £35 million on £157 million turnover, added that it was on the look-out for acquisitions.

Pubmaster to float

PUBMASTER confirmed that it has approached lead-managers to arrange a stock market flotation within three years.

Based on today's estimates, a flotation would value the company at £250 million to £300 million, it said. The group is believed to be looking for a listing to finance acquisitions in cash. It was recently out-bid by Enterprise Inns for Gibbs Mew.

Britons top music charts

BRTONS were the highest per-capita spenders on pre-recorded music in the world last year, at four albums per person per year, according to figures released yesterday by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry. But the UK market fell by 5.6 per cent in real terms to £1.66 billion as consumers bought 3 per cent fewer CDs, cassettes, LPs and singles. CD sales, consistently upwards since 1992, fell 1 per cent as music lovers bought fewer discs. Worldwide, the IFPI said music sales were flat in real terms at \$38 billion.

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The Guardian Wednesday August 19 1996

Racing

Wonderful win brings whip bans

Graham Rock

PAT EDDERY, Frankie Dettori and Kieren Fallon, the three jockeys involved in a thrilling battle for the Juddmonte International on One So Wonderful, Faithful Son and Chester House at York yesterday, were all suspended for whip abuse. Eddery was banned for eight days by the local stewards for using his whip with excessive force and frequency. Dettori will miss four days for using his whip with excessive frequency, and Fallon was handed a three-day suspension for the same offence.

Eddery had been cautioned by the officials for his use of the whip on Celeric in the previous race.

Richard Mullen, who drove home Hoh Steamer in the final event, was banned for two days, having used his whip too frequently.

The champion jockey over jumps, Tony McCoy, received suspensions on both Saturday and Sunday for misuse of the whip but John Maxse, on behalf of the Jockey Club, denied there was a growing problem. "Since the rules

were changed in 1997, whip offences have declined by 40 per cent and in 140 Group races since 1993 only seven have resulted in penalties for whip abuse," he said.

A seemingly logical solution might be to disqualify horses whose jockeys are found guilty of whip offences, but yesterday Kitz, a well-beaten fourth, would have been awarded the £190,000 prize. "It would have been a farce," said Maxse.

The whip bans overshadowed a great race. Faithful Son made the running and quickened in the straight mile headed by Chester House approaching the final furlong.

Fallon's mount hung left and One So Wonderful and Eddery, who had a clear run down the rail, edged ahead. Faithful Son rallied and appeared to catch One So Wonderful close home, but on the line his head was in the air, while One So Wonderful's neck was at full stretch.

"She proved today that she is a genuine Group 1 filly," said winning trainer Luca Cumani.

Persian Punch beat Celeric by a short head in the Lonsdale Stakes. David Elsworth had no explanation for his



Photocall... One So Wonderful (right) wins on the nod from Faithful Son (centre) and Chester House

horse's disappointing run in the Ascot Gold Cup, but he hopes to take his stayer to Australia. "We'll look at the weights for the Melbourne Cup and if we're happy he'll go with a run in the Caulfield Cup as a prep race," he said.

The easiest winner of the

day was Sea Wave, who ran away with the Great Voltigeur by four lengths from Rebel Gal. Godolphin has an embarrassment of riches for the St. Leger, with Nedawi and Central Park also possible. "He worked well at home but had never run on ground as fast

as this before, and we weren't sure whether he would go on 12," said Simon Crisford.

Sansalito Bay (3.10) could be the answer to the Tote Ebor today. In the doldrums for the past few weeks, Ian Balding's team is now in good form. His colt won the Mel-

rose Stakes over this course and distance a year ago, followed up at Doncaster and has dropped down the weights since. He acts well on fast ground, wears blinkers for the first time in public and is reasonably priced at around 20-1.

Kempton tonight

RON COX	TOP FORM
5.30 Water Force	Lift The Doff
6.00 Lady Larceny	Sunny Feet
6.30 Dotted Line	Alm High
7.00 Ancon	Alm High
7.30 Crown Of Trees	Secret Of The Night
8.00 Ella Larceny	Millicent

Virtualy flat, right-handed triangular course of 1m5f with separate 1m5f section. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

5.30 HAMWORTH APPRENTICES' H'CAP

1.10 30000 Lift The Doff (11) 11m 5f 4-10	P. Phipps
2.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
5.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
6.10 30000 Ella Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith

Virtualy flat, right-handed triangular course of 1m5f with separate 1m5f section. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

6.00 AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES 2YO

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
5.10 30000 Ella Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith

Virtualy flat, right-handed triangular course of 1m5f with separate 1m5f section. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

6.30 MAIDEN FILLIES' STAKES 2YO

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
5.10 30000 Ella Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith

Virtualy flat, right-handed triangular course of 1m5f with separate 1m5f section. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

Leicester tonight

RON COX	TOP FORM
5.40 Bubbly	Bold Times
6.10 Indian City	Honey Bee
6.40 Salsbury	Salsbury
7.10 Salsbury	Salsbury
7.40 Salsbury	Salsbury
8.10 Salsbury	Salsbury

Right-handed, 15m track with 400 m furlong. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

5.40 DAVID WILSON HOMES STAKES

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
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6.10 SPORTING INDEX CLASSIC CONDITIONS STAKES 2YO

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
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8.00 PRINCE STREET H'CAP

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
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SPORTS NEWS 13

York Jackpot card

GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.05 Salsbury	Salsbury
2.35 Salsbury	Salsbury
3.10 Salsbury	Salsbury
3.45 Salsbury	Salsbury
4.15 Salsbury	Salsbury
4.45 Salsbury	Salsbury
5.15 Salsbury	Salsbury

Left-handed, U-shaped course of 2m with run-in of nearly 5f. Straight 8f. Ideal track for long-striding gallopers.

Drives: Low numbers favoured in 3.10.

Drives day winners: 4.45 Man Of The Night.

Blanked first time: 2.05 Salsbury, 3.10 Salsbury, 3.45 Salsbury, 4.15 Salsbury, 4.45 Salsbury, 5.15 Salsbury.

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2.05 MOTABILITY RATED STAKES H'CAP

1.10 30000 Lady Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
2.10 30000 Dotted Line (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
3.10 30000 Ancon (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
4.10 30000 Crown Of Trees (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith
5.10 30000 Ella Larceny (11) 11m 5f 4-10	M. J. Smith

Virtualy flat, right-handed triangular course of 1m5f with separate 1m5f section. Straight mile. Good to firm. 6f. Seven day winners. None. Drives: High best over 6f. Drives day winners: None. Blanked first time: 5.30 Dotted Line, 7.00 Phipps, Ancon, 8.00 Phipps & Rice. Widespread. None.

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Cantona steps out for a last hurrah

dictable Frenchman announced his retirement, claiming he had lost his passion for the game and had decided to pursue an acting career.

There he has proved his mettle in the British film *Elizabeth I*, out later this year. Critics given a sneak preview said that, in Henry VIII-style doublet and hose, the shaven-headed Cantona fits well into a small but significant role as Monsieur le Fox, French ambassador to the English court.

Cantona has also finished filming his first lead role in *Mookie*, a French-language film in which he plays a former boxer who befriends a talking chimpanzee.

Unfriendly fire fails to wither the coach

MOORE observes that the majority of the public are still in touch with him and that the reaction to his book would have been less critical had England won the World Cup. It is difficult to argue with that, yet he still does not seem to realize that in some eyes, after working so hard to get the book out of the nation's intrusion he has been guilty of double standard when an extract from his book appears under the heading *Gaza Trashed My Room*.

Nowhere does the book actually say this in so many words, any more than Holmes ever uttered the phrase "But Huddle, like Watson!" But Huddle, like Holmes, is stuck with it.

UEFA's executive committee is to discuss radical changes to its three European club competitions this month in an attempt to combat the threat of a break-away Super League.

Manchester United and Arsenal confirmed they had been involved in talks about joining a league to start in 1995, but the Football Association, the Football Association and the FIFA president Sepp Blatter urged clubs to "hold fire" on Super League discussions.

Now the general secretary of UEFA, Georges Lech, says that the top European clubs and has hinted at change. "UEFA's route to the future is based on consultation and co-operation," he said. "There is no need for any club to sign an agreement which might be detrimental."

Plans could mean increasing the number of teams in the Champions League from 24 to 32 and merging the Cup Winners' Cup and UEFA Cup.

Liverpool are interested in signing the AIK Stockholm and Sweden defender Johan Mjallby.

Nelson Vivas played his first game for Arsenal yesterday and looked the defensive midfielder. The Argentinian played at right-back as the reserves beat Colchester 4-0 and his colleague Steve Bould said: "He has the skill to suggest he is a really class player. I had no problems playing alongside him."

The Frenchman Philippe Troussier is to be offered a two-year contract to coach Japan. The 43-year-old coached South Africa at the World Cup finals.

The Le Havre and France international Franck Pongbe has been banned for six months after testing positive for Nandrolone, a proscribed drug.

erra at 24 has had 45 fights and nine world title challenges and is set to fight Riker Winton for the vacant WBO world super-bantamweight title.

He says that his ambitions lie in expanding into the rest of the world, said Warren. "These three fighters are all top quality and I want to see if I can do as much about becoming the premier force in world boxing. I hope all three will shortly be able to show that."

Mike Tyson's application to return to boxing will be decided in Las Vegas on September 5 by the five-man boxing commission that stripped his license after a bit of part of Holyfield's right ear

[illegible]

TheGuardian **INTERACTIVE**

Cricket

Paul Weaver bones up on the weary South Africans who are relieved to be going home at last

Dog day afternoon for tourists

THERE is a theory that dogs adopt the quirky personalities of their owners, and vice versa, and that if dogs would only live longer they would eventually have us emerging from some muddy water with a stick between our teeth and a cocking a leg every time we passed a lamp-post.

We see partners of some elderly marriages merging towards an accommodating hybrid, finishing each other's jokes and sometimes their meals, communicating with little more than a nod and a half-smile, a wink of intimacy and a glance of contempt.

At Edgbaston yesterday there were clear signs that the cricketers of England and South Africa had been seeing far too much of each other through this long and grumpy unrelenting summer. There was even a hint of role reversal, as in that wonderful Victorian novel *Vice Versa*, by

F Anstey, in which Mr Bulfinch and his schoolboy son Dick change places, with often hilarious results.

In the field England were noisy, chirpy and combative. South Africa, meanwhile, had stolen England's more traditional clothes: they were a team of polite losers and were heading home. They won yesterday's match but the fact that they failed to qualify for tomorrow's final on net runs summed up their bitterly disappointing tour. It was fate's last giggle at their expense.

So often we have seen England as we saw South Africa yesterday, mooching around on some foreign field, heads down, kicking the turf with a silent, sullen oath, counting the hours to their flight home tomorrow, cursing potty umpires and the desperate unfairness of life in general.

South Africa know they were marginally the stronger

side in the Test series, and their weary limbs spoke the body language of frustration most eloquently. The England players, meanwhile, appeared to be in the mood to crack open a few bottles of Castle over a beach braai. The voice of Alec Stewart boomed throughout South Africa's in-

nings. "Bowled. Crofty" and "Well done the legend of Edgbaston". Directed at Nick Knight, presumably.

It was almost a relief when the South Africans behaved the way they are supposed to. When Stewart got out Sham Pollock gave him a few blunt parting words, although Stew-

art returned them with interest, the way England captains not always have.

The crowd cheered England, because they were wearing the right coloured clothing, but at the same time must have empathised with a tired and forlorn South Africa. Two players in particular had the crowd's sympathy.

Allan Donald, the champion fast bowler of Orange Free State, Warwickshire and the world, has been magnificent through the summer but had bowled poorly in the opening Test on this ground. Apart from next year's World Cup he is unlikely to be seen again in international cricket in Britain.

Pollock, of Natal and Warwickshire, has failed to push his claims to be recognised as the world's leading all-rounder. Certainly those lavish comparisons with Garry Sobers, made by the coach Bob Woolmer at the start of

Scoreboard

SOUTH AFRICA	
G Kirsten c Stewart b Gough	7
M J Rindel bow b Gough	29
D J Cullinan b Gough	10
J N Rhodes c Stewart b Maltby	10
W J Genge bow b Croft	10
J H Kallis b Austin	10
S M Pollock not out	10
P L Symcox b Maltby	10
TM V Roovers not out	10
Bairstow (Rt) 10, 10	10
Total (for 7, 58 overs)	244
Run of 100s: 25, 25, 79, 140, 165, 172, 241.	
Did not bat: A A Donald, M Haywood.	
Bowling: Gough 10-4-2-2; Maltby 9-0-47-2; Austin 10-0-41-1; Maltby 9-0-55-2; Symcox 10-0-40-2; Croft 10-0-40-1.	
Umpires: J W Holder and G Sharp.	

ENGLAND	
N V Knight b Symcox	74
A D Brown run out	27
TA J Stewart c Rhodes b Pollock	27
G A Hick c Symcox b Croft	27
N Hussain b A D Croft	27
A J Morkel b Symcox	10
R D Croft c Rhodes b Rindel	10
TD Austin b Donald	10
D Gough bow b Pollock	10
P J Morkel c Croft b Donald	10
A D Maltby not out	10
Excess (for 10, 10)	10
Total (48.5 overs)	280
Run of 100s: 7, 49, 101, 170, 188, 200, 213, 217.	
Bowling: Donald 10-0-41-2; Pollock 9-0-55-2; Kallis 4-0-44-0; Haywood 4-0-45-2; Symcox 10-0-40-2; Croft 10-0-40-1.	
South Africa won by 14 runs.	

Fickle tickles and a right old pickle



THE important code to the summer's main Test series is not this trivial triangular tournament but a meeting taking place today 5,000 miles away. The United Cricket Board of South Africa, controller of the game in a country seething with discontent about the umpiring at Trent Bridge and Headingley, is certain to instigate a wide-ranging experiment with new technology.

Certain, because All

Bairstow, the managing director of the board, wants it badly and he is used to getting his way.

Later this year West Indies arrive in South Africa for a series that promises to be every bit as crunching, and probably more competitive, than the one England are due to play in Australia, and Bairstow has already secured the support of the tour manager Clive Lloyd for his ideas.

They can't do anything about the Tests and one-day internationals, which will be conducted with the present, limited, range of powers for the third umpire. But the warm-up tour games there are all televised, as are most of the routine domestic matches. So a wide-ranging experiment will be conducted, giving umpires the right to consult TV replays in all kinds of situations.

It is possible that in six months even the technophile Dr Bairstow will be sobered about the power of replays to resolve what has become a genuine crisis in the game. Clearly things cannot go on as they are, because the umpires are being stripped of authority and respect. But the biggest problem they face is "the nick". Has the ball touched the bat? Or the air? Or something else? And many umpires are highly sceptical whether even a dozen replays can necessarily solve these riddles for them.

"It's sound not sight that's your No. 1 sense when you're umpiring," one experienced official insists (an anonymous one, this being a publicity-shy game).

"Noise is the key to everything because when there's no gap between bat and ball you can't possibly see whether it's touched or not.

The trouble we have is these new materials.

"In the days when pads were made of horsehair they gave off a lovely soft thud that was totally different to a bat noise. Now they sound funny. Then there's the plastic things on gloves and the forearm guards that give off sharp noises that are very hard to distinguish."

The problem is much worse in Test cricket than any other form of the game. At county games there is not much ambient noise. At one-day games there will be crowd noise but very few men round the bat. At Tests you get both, and by Saturday afternoon a fair proportion of the crowd is in an alcoholic stupor and has ceased to listen down when the bowler runs in.

This source reckons he would be best helped by replays for deciding heights of lbw appeals and sorting out some of the confusions down the leg side. These can be impossible to decide on but easier with cameras from different angles.

My own fear right from the start of TV umpiring was that it would prove impossible to restrict its application. And so it has proved. Soon, on an English morning, with the ball swinging, umpires could be resorting to technology to sort out lbw appeals virtually every over, scared that they don't ask for help they will be seen as pig-headed and perhaps incompetent. Yet applying the lbw law is the basic skill of umpiring. And cricket matches last long enough already, thank you.

How is this going to resolve itself? Heaven knows, but the South African experiments will be worth watching.

IN THE meantime, the most startling cricket revelation of the week concerned the pay cheque received by Javed Akhtar, the hopeless Headingley umpire. The Englishman Peter Willey got about £2,500 but Akhtar, as a Pakistani, was paid a Pakistani-type rate of £500, according to the international Cricket Council.

This is absurd. The cost of living in Pakistan may be low, but some people on the subcontinent have a lot of money and they have been using it to bet on cricket matches, and allegedly rig them. I am most certainly not suggesting Akhtar was corrupt: his wrong decisions affected both sides. He was just not up to the job, paid through inexperience. But this situation is certainly an invitation to corruption. Top people should umpire top games and be paid top rates.

Emburey and Haynes reunited as Northants coaching team

DESMOND HAYNES, the former West Indies opener, has been recruited by Northamptonshire to coach the county's batsmen. Haynes, who has had spells coaching Sussex and Hampshire, will visit Wantage Road next week after being contacted by Northamptonshire's chief coach John Emburey.

Steve Coveale, Northants' chief executive, said: "We've looked at the possibility of employing a specialist batting coach for some time. John looked at several individuals but his preferred choice was Des-

mond Haynes, whom he knows well from their time together at Middlesex."

Mark Butcher will lead a depleted Surrey side into today's County Championship match against Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge. But the leaders will be without Adam Hobbins and Alec Stewart, both of whom will be on England one-day duty at Lord's.

Ally Brown is also on international duty and Graham Thorpe is out with a long-term back injury. But Ian Salisbury returns after missing the win over Derbyshire the week before last.

Sport in brief

Motor Racing

Heinz-Harald Frentzen yesterday continued to receive treatment at a Vienna hospital for an intestinal virus. The German driver was taken to the hospital after finishing fifth in his Williams in Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix.

Rugby Union

Moseley have signed the former Wales Under-21 full-back and Somerset cricketer Stefan Jones from Exeter. The 24-year-old Jones, who has agreed a one-year part-time contract, joins at the end of the cricket season.

Tennis

Britain's No. 2 Tim Henman, who was to have played the Italian Vincenzo Santopadre, was frustrated by the weather yesterday when rain wrecked the opening day of the Pilot Pen International in New Haven, Connecticut.

Ice Hockey

Newcastle have re-signed one of their former imports, the Canadian defenceman Mike Bodnaruk, writes Vic Batchelder. The 28-year-old Bodnaruk spent last season in Germany with the Schwenningen Wild Wings, having scored 25 goals in 41 games for Newcastle during the 1996-97 season.

Sailing

Iain Percy, third in the Finn European Championship, continued his drive to the fore of the Olympic single-handed dinghy class at the Gold Cup - the World Championship in Athens, writes Bob Fisher. Percy won the second race and lies eighth.

Cricket

News and Scores

0930 16 13 +

Counties update

Derbyshire	24	Middlesex	33
Durham	25	Northants	34
Essex	26	Nottingham	35
Glamorgan	27	Somerset	36
Gloucestershire	28	Surrey	37
Hampshire	29	Sussex	38
Kent	30	Warwickshire	39
Lancashire	31	Worcestershire	40
Leicestershire	32	Yorkshire	41

Complete county scores

0930 16 13 23

CALLS COST 10P PER MINUTE, PLUS 10P PER MINUTE. 10P PER MINUTE. 10P PER MINUTE.

The Guardian

INTERACTIVE

European Athletics Championships



Young guns of Britain blast from their blocks

Duncan Mackay sees the 100 metres trio get into their stride at the Nep Stadium

LINFORD CHRISTIE may have gone but Britain's grip on the European 100 metres title looks firm after a trio of young sprint hopefuls all performed impressively on the opening day of the championships in the Nep Stadium in Budapest yesterday.

The Belgrave duo Darren Campbell and Dwain Chambers and Coventry's Marlon Devonish all looked in a different league to the rest of the Continent by cruising through the opening two rounds, setting the three fastest times in the second, as they sought to keep the title in British hands after Christie's three successive wins.

The British champion Campbell, lured back into the sport from non-league football after Christie gave him the opportunity of working with him, coasted to victory in both his races, recording 10.40sec in the first and 10.26 in the second.

There were shades of his former mentor from the 28-year-old afterwards as he stripped to the waist as soon as he crossed the line and jogged past the waiting television and radio crews. "I'm primed and ready to explode," he said.

Chambers, a client of Christie's management group, ran 10.28 in the first round as he eased up to finish second to the Greek sprinter Haralambos Papadimos. The 30-year-old, the world junior record holder, ran 10.26 in the next round, slowing in the last 20 metres to eyeball Poland's Marcin Nowak in the next lane.

The 22-year-old Devonish, the winner of the Nivea Sprint Series challenge this summer, gave Britain realistic hopes of an unprecedented clean sweep by winning his heats in 10.38

and 10.28 respectively. In the second, he left the 1994 silver medalist Geir Moen, of Norway, trailing in his wake by two metres.

It may be the sprinters to whom Britain now looks for success but there was a reminder of past middle-distance glory days when all three runners qualified for the final of the 1500m. It is the first time that has happened in a major championship since 1986 when Steve Cram and Sebastian Coe finished first and second in this event in Stuttgart.

The final tomorrow promises to be a battle between Britain and Spain. John Maycock and Tony Whiteman finished second and third respectively in their semi-final, won by Reyes Estevez, and Matthew Yates was third in his behind Fermin Cacho and Andres Diaz.

"Middle distance hasn't left the country down this time," said Yates. "Three Brits in the final just like the old days when I started." Maycock was boosted by a good-luck message from his father, currently recovering from a triple heart-bypass operation in Sheffield. "If I can go through an operation like



Qualified success... Matthew Yates heads for a place in the 1500m final, where he will be joined by Tony Whiteman and John Maycock. Diane Modahl, No. 466 top left, squeezed into the next round of the 800m

MAN PHOTOGRAPH: MARK THOMPSON

this then you can win a medal," he said. Jon Brown, a former Yorkshire Schools team-mate of Maycock, finished fourth in the 10,000m after a brave effort in the stifling hot conditions. But he had no answer when Antonio Pinto, twice a winner of the London Marathon, surged with 10 laps to go.

The Portuguese runner gradually wore his opposition down, finally breaking away from the German duo of Stephanie Frank and Dieter Bauermann in the last two kilometres to win in 27min 48.64sec. It was a master class in tactics which Britain's Paula Radcliffe would be well advised to study for her race

in the women's event tonight. Brown always chased hard for a medal but ultimately had no answer to the superior finishing kick of Bauermann. Christine, not competing at these championships for the first time since 1992, will have found plenty of reason to enjoy this opening day from his position in the BBC TV studio

as another athlete he coaches, Paul Gray, smashed the Welsh 400m record for the third time in four races.

Gray, who puts his success this year down to Christie's influence, sliced more than half a second off the record with a time of 49.16. The 29-year-old was in one of the toughest heats of the opening round and had to fight hard for third - the final automatic place - as all seven runners dipped under 50 seconds.

Another athlete pleased with her day's work was the 800m runner Diane Modahl, who ran 2:00.62 to reach the semi-final as one of the fastest qualifiers.

It was the ideal start for the British team, many of whom still have bad memories of the first day at last year's World Championships in Athens when the gold medal hope Kelly Holmes was injured in the opening hour.

Rugby League

Domestic game united at last in lobbying to keep Kiwi players from going home for Australia Tests

Andy Wilson

MAURICE LINDSAY yesterday became the second British administrator this week to persuade New Zealand not to select British-based players for October's two Tests against Australia.

Lindsay, the managing director of Super League Europe, issued a press release in Sydney claiming to have reached a "gentleman's agreement" with Gerald Ryan, the president of the New Zealand Rugby League. But this surprised officials at the Rugby Football

League in Leeds, who believed that their chief executive Neil Tunncliffe had already secured such an agreement.

All will become clear today when Tunncliffe, Lindsay, Ryan and representatives of the other seven full members of the old International Board

meet to set up a new board. Lindsay is not expected to be offered a role on the new body, as the Australians insist on dealing with the RFL. However, the RFL has agreed that the Super League clubs should have a representative. Among other matters they will discuss an Austr-

lian proposal for a World Cup next autumn and seek to prevent further club-versus-country conflicts.

The British authorities, both RFL and Super League, believe that international rugby should take priority, but these Tests were organised after the dates for the British game's

play-off series had been finalised. "I think it's sad," said Henry Paul, who was expected to be selected by New Zealand with his brother Robbie and Richie Blackmore, "because I would always choose country over club. But if they are the rules then I will get on with it."

هَذَا مِنَ الْأَصْلِ

Three whipping boys are banned, page 13

Hoddle thinks about defence, page 14

Brown blows medal chance, page 15

Hail King Eric the Red, page 14

SportsGuardian

Triangular Tournament
England v South Africa

England stutter on path to the final

David Hopps at Edgbaston sees the hosts qualify despite a disconcerting defeat

ENGLAND will face Sri Lanka in the final of the Emirates Triangular series at Lord's tomorrow, but that is about the extent of their satisfaction. A 14-run defeat by South Africa left them grateful to qualify by virtue of a better net run-rate and committed to further reflection on the balance of their one-day side.

Even in the aftermath of a confident victory against Sri Lanka at Lord's on Sunday there was concern that England's supplanting of their gang of all-rounders with batting and bowling specialists had still not created an ideal balance to contest next summer's World Cup.

This defeat will only heighten that concern. England, needing only 84 from 16 overs with eight wickets remaining, faltered just as they had against Sri Lanka. This time it proved more costly. Shaun Pollock having Darren Gough bowled with seven balls remaining to ensure that South Africa would return home tomorrow with a token victory.

Run-rate calculations had meant that Sri Lanka were assured of a place in the final

whatever yesterday's result. England had to lose by no more than 46 runs, and that distinction was never seriously in doubt. Ian Austin, smashing to the cover boundary the sort of wide delivery that had brought Jacques Kallis interminable maidens during the Test series. Nevertheless the middle order does not have a convincing air.

Nick Knight assisted England's cause with a persistent if hardly fluent 74, ended when he was bowled cutting at Pat Symcox, but the innings of quality was again provided by Graeme Hick.

It might well be cheerful to present high-class innings of 86 at Lord's and 64 yesterday as evidence of Hick's nonchalance when the pressure is off, but the temptation remains. Two shots — a pull for six against Pollock to reach 50 and an easy off-drive against Allan Donald — were strikingly relaxed.

Jonty Rhodes also supplied two marvellous parting memories. England's innings began with Ally Brown risking a single to backward point and anticipating a run-out for night long before the ball hit the stumps; Robert Croft's



You take the high Rhodes... South Africa's fine fielder soars to catch Robert Croft.

PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN MURFEL

drive was splendidly grabbed high to Rhodes's left at extra cover.

Rhodes had been promoted to No. 4 in the morning as South Africa opted for a

changed batting order in the manner that a losing poker player gloomily regards a reshuffled pack. Less easily addressed were the opening problems that have bedevilled

them all summer. Gough dismissed both within four overs, Gary Kirsten's edge to the wicketkeeper concluding a strange tour in which he made a double century at Old Trafford and 79 runs in 13 other international innings.

Darryl Cullinan was in more expansive form, his 70 from 73 balls including one dismissive flip over square leg for six as Adam Hoggie's two overs cost 22. It needed a decent delivery to silence him, and Gough produced it, nipping one back sharply to strike leg stump.

Hansie Cronje's resolute good humour has survived all manner of umpiring cross-examinations this summer, and he persisted to the end when he sought to reverse-sweep a delivery from Croft that was too full for the shot, and was adjudged lbw to a ball that brushed his glove.

When Austin, rocking to the crease like a wind-up per-

guin, bowled Kallis, South Africa were 172 for six with only 10 overs remaining. That they scored a further 72 was due to Symcox, whose roasting 61, from 39 balls, included four sixes in eight balls. Dropped on three, by Hoggie at long-on, he reduced the game to such unsophisticated levels that it was entirely appropriate that he should be bowled in the final over swinging at a waist-high full toss. Two wickets in a niggardly spell confirmed him as an entirely deserving Man of the Match.

It has been good to catch a glimpse — perhaps a final glimpse — of Symcox before the summer is out. He has the look of a hard-living, avuncular barman who knows everybody's secrets, although not so avuncular that anybody would ever dare to ask him for a drink after time.

Paul Warner and scoreboard, page 15

A gravy train screaming for a brake man



Frank Keating

IT IS still less than three years since rugby union's gravy train steamed off on its fast track. But it has been a while now since it hurtled uncontrollably into the buffers. The Mr Toad who merrily booted in — peep peep! — wholesale professionalism with a toot of his whistle in Paris on August 27, 1995, is the very same fellow who is presiding over the present wreckage.

Are there any in the game (or, preferably, outside it) big enough to cry "Enough!" and rescue from himself the beleaguered but still skilfully presiding Queen's Counsellor Vernon Pugh? It will take nerve and character as well as a constitutional revolution to prise from the controls the stealthy and buttoned-up Welsh dictator who seems to have a mission (heaven knows why) to remain four-square in the driving seat — even though the train is off the rails and, preposterously, going nowhere any more except, possibly, oblivion.

The ubiquitous Pugh is chairman of the whole global game's governing body, the International Rugby Board; he is founding father of the European Rugby Cup; and with two such spanners in his toolkit he must be tinkering seriously with the works whenever he has time to sit in committee with the Welsh Rugby Union.

Meanwhile the British Isles rugby union season begins in just over a week: a fortnight in the case of the English. Not that any fixtures have been published for Saturday September 5, nor league nor cup details, nor broadcasting billings announced, nor marketing strategies pushed, nor perimeter advertising sold, nor even precise and certain details of any club's playing staff.

All is chaos, all is fury, all is impotence. Apparently, English First Division clubs lost £21 million between them last year. "Our clubs are withering on the vine," says Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens.

His team manager Mark Evans, more practically, laments: "The real worry is that all the self-inflicted chaos will, at some point, so infuriate and anger the game's supporters that they will simply give up

the ghost. Rugby has always drawn upon a reservoir of largely untapped goodwill... but such patience is not inexhaustible.

Through all such dark but realistic foreboding there has been one illuminating glimmer these past few days. Or rather two. In their forlorn and wretched bankruptcy those two once smugly all-powerful clubs, Coventry and Bristol, might almost inadvertently have stumbled upon the right answer. They each announced they were reverting to the old ancient tried-and-tested order. Except it was all above board and need not any more be tainted by the nudge-and-wink sneer of "amateurism". Simply, both clubs were going to be "semi-professional".

Players were being told to go out and find jobs, serious squad training would be obligatory only three nights a week, and for playing on Saturday they would all have a decent few quid presented up front and on the level into their bank accounts.

This is surely the way forward: that is, by going backwards and happily reverting to type, relocating any club's aim as one of sociability rather than profitability.

Okay, if they must — or rather, more likely, till their millionaire backers have had their fill of grandstanding in the front row — let eight clubs, say, and one or two each from Wales, Ireland and Scotland break away and form a "super league" and play with anyone like-minded anywhere. With or without Mr Pugh's say-so.

From the corner of the bibulous and convivial Saturday evening clubhouse bar, the huge majority of the rugby world might catch, out of the corner of their eye, a few replays of spectacular tries run in by the superduper millionaire stars of this "other world's" satellite Global Games Inc presentation. And then turn back in no time to conviviality and good fellowship...

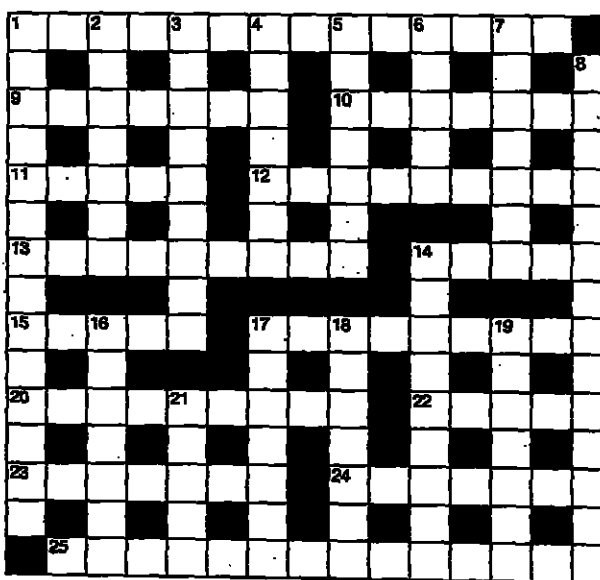
PENURY may have made Coventry en-

lightened. They should have listened to their all-time finest 18 years ago. When he retired in 1980, David Duckham warned: "Rugby administration must not allow the game to become a national ego-promotion exercise, a vehicle of personal aggrandisement for the elite."

"It must preserve the game's basic strength of being a tough sport for men with a fine sense of social freemasonry. If it becomes too professional the structure of the game will die." Great player, great prophet, too.

Guardian Crossword No 21,357

Set by Araucaria



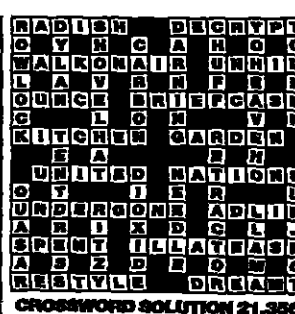
Across

- 1 Prime example of 21's work — James is in bed or in trouble (4,4,6)
- 9 Lack of compunction made by one in the aristocracy (2,5)
- 10 Give food and drink, perhaps, to one who decides about silence (7)
- 11 Advertisements for 21? (5)
- 12 Talk (turkey, possibly, to get a source of heat (3,6)
- 13 Do nothing separately in classical basis of breast-feeding (9)
- 14 Tribe that came back in from the cold? (5)
- 15 Today's version of a sycophant (5)
- 17 Note for celebration in song requires self-help (9)
- 20 Invite a Southern policeman to project 5 or 21? (8)

- 22 Essential part of beings (5)
- 23 Severely criticise essayist, a good guy (7)
- 24 European directions with no point in them (7)
- 25 Needlework heavyweight holds to Livingstone in London (5,5)

Down

- 1 Characters of villainy team up with exploiters' way (14)
- 2 Low-key send-up of coach (American) in football club (7)
- 3 Old Turkish guard is first of soldiers in month that's heartless (5)
- 4 A fool, say, needs first-class weapon (7)
- 5 Large 7s take on philosopher with alan (7)
- 6 Opera, the Ring, has a fishy opening (5)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 21,356

- 7 In company I feel at sea and out in the cold? (3,4)
- 8,14 That was my chair, say ninth week in school, where my ex and his girl used to 21 in song (5,2,1,5,2,3,4)
- 16 Places for some print to enter suitable essay (7)
- 17 Revel in trick with tried bread (7)
- 18 Woodcutter's worry observed (7)
- 19 Doctor again in sanctum (7)
- 21 The divine Muriel (5)

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"Many things do not make sense and still work. In other words, the theory behind it could be wrong and it still could be effective."

A new cure for asthma? Peter Lennon investigates

G2 p5

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